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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY,
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Law, William, 1686-1761.
The works of the Reverend
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THE

WORKS

Of the Reverend

WILLIAM LAW, A. M.

VOL. IX.

CONTAINING

I. Of Juſtification by Faith and Works.

II. An Humble; Earneſt, and Affectionate Addreſs to the Clergy.

III. A Collection of Letters on the moſt Intereſting and Important Subjects.

LONDON:

Printed for J. Richardson, in *Pater-Noſter-Row*.
MDCCLXII.

OF

JUSTIFICATION

BY

FAITH and WORKS.

A

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A METHODIST

AND

A CHURCHMAN.

By WILLIAM LAW, M. A.

THE THIRD EDITION.

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Printed for G. ROBINSON, in Pater-noſter-Row.
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A

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN

A METHODIST

AND

A CHURCHMAN.

Methodiſt. SAY what you will, Sir, I muſt ſtill ſtand to it, that almoſt all the Sermons of your Biſhops and Curates, for theſe laſt hundred Years, have been full of a Soul-deſtroying Doctrine *.

Churchman. Pray, what is that Doctrine?

Methodiſt. It is the Doctrine of Salvation, "partly by Faith, and partly by Works; "or Juſtification by Faith and Works †."

Churchman. Salvation by *Faith and Works* is a plain, and very intelligible Scripture-Truth. But Salvation *partly* by Faith and *partly* by Works, is a falſe and groundleſs

* Mr. *Berridge*'s Letters, p. 20. † Ibid. p. 13.

Explication of the Matter, proceeding either from Art, or Ignorance.—What ſounder Goſpel-Truth than to ſay, that we are ſaved by *Jeſus Chriſt*, God and Man? But what falſer Account could be given of it, than to ſay, that if ſo, then we are ſaved partly by Jeſus, and partly by Chriſt; that Jeſus does ſomething, and Chriſt adds the reſt. For is not Jeſus Chriſt, as ſuch, the one undivided Saviour, with one undivided Operation? And who can more endeavour to loſe the Meaning, and pervert the Senſe of this Goſpel-Truth, than he who conſiders Jeſus as ſeparately, and Chriſt as ſeparately, doing their Parts one after the other, the one making up what was wanting in the other towards the Work of our Salvation?

Now to ſeparate Faith from Works in this Manner, the one partly doing this, and the other partly doing that, is in as full Contrariety to Scripture, to all Truth, and the Nature of the Thing, as to ſeparate Jeſus from Chriſt. For as the *one Saviour* is manifeſted in and by Jeſus Chriſt, one undivided Perſon; ſo the *one Salvation* is manifeſted, when Faith is in Works, and Works are in Faith, as Jeſus is in Chriſt, and Chriſt is in Jeſus.

Again, how plain and good a Scripture-Truth is this, that the loving of God with all the Powers of Heart, Soul, and Spirit, and

the loving our Neighbour as ourſelves, is the one true fulfilling of the whole Law and Prophets. But how falſely would this be ſet forth by him, who ſhould ſay, that it is *partly* the Love of God, and *partly* the Love of our Neighbour, the one adding that which the other wanted, and doing that which the other could not do; as if they were two ſeparate Things, which with their different Powers make up the fulfilling of the Law. ——For theſe two Loves, or rather two Names of Love, are in the ſtricteſt Truth but one Thing, one divine Spirit of Love, from one Ground, full of one and the ſame Operation, no more different or ſeparable from one another, than *Flame* is different or ſeparable from its *flying upwards*.——Thus St. John, *If a Man ſay, I love God, and hateth his Brother, he is a Lyar*;—but he could not therefore be a Lyar, if the Love of God was a different, or ſeparate Thing from the Love of our Neighbour.

Yet this is your Friend's falſe and miſtaken Way of ſetting forth Juſtification, if ſo be it is by Faith and Works; namely, his dividing them aſunder from one another, and aſcribing his own invented *partlys* and *partlys*, firſt to one, and then to the other; all which is as mere Fiction, and full of the ſame Abſurdity, as if ſome other Scholar ſhould with the like

like *partlys* ſet forth the State of a living Creature; *viz.* that if it is in a living State, it muſt be ſo partly by *Life*, and partly by its *living Operations*, as if *Life* and its *living Operations* were two diſtinct and ſeparate Things, that contributed their ſeparate Powers, and joined in their different Actions, to make and keep up a *living Creature*.—This, and not one Jot leſs, is the Abſurdity of your partlys and partlys aſcribed to a Juſtification, ſuppoſed to be the Effect of Faith and Works.—For Chriſtian Faith and Chriſtian Works are as much one and the ſame indiviſible Thing, as *Life* is one and the ſame indiviſible Thing with its *living Operations*.

Methodiſt. I can call all this nothing elſe but quibbling about Words, and mere running away from the one only Thing which ought to be debated, and that is, whether St. *Paul* hath not, over and over, placed the Whole of Juſtification *in* and *by Faith alone*?

Churchman. Let me aſk you, did your ever hear or read of a dead Faith, and a living Faith? Or do you think the Difference between them to be Nothing at all, but that the one has as much of Juſtification in it as the other?

Methodiſt. This a trifling Queſtion, ſince you know, as well as I do, that our awakened Preacher has expreſsly declared, that there

is

is dead Faith, and then it is dead when it *worketh not by Love.*

Churchman. Well then, if ſo, the Matter ſtands thus; *Works* prove Faith to be living; Want of Works proves Faith to be dead; and thence you conclude that it is a Soul-deſtroying Doctrine to teach Chriſtians, that they are to be ſaved by Faith and Works.—Surely, Sir, you are not quite awake.

Methodiſt. You are growing hot, my Friend; but be as hot as you will, I muſt tell you, in the Words of Mr. B— "That "be you ever ſo ſober, ſerious, juſt, and de-"vout, you are ſtill under the Curſe of God, "provided you have any allowed Reliance "on your own good Works, and think that "they are to do ſomething for you, and "Chriſt to do the reſt."

Churchman. In Anſwer to this, I only ſay, that be you and your Friend ever ſo full of *Faith,* ſo that you could remove Mountains, you are ſtill under the Curſe of God, provided you have any *allowed Reliance* upon your *own Faith,* and think that it is to do *ſomething* for you, and Chriſt to do the *reſt.*—For a *Reliance* upon our *own Faith,* and a Reliance upon our *own Works,* are juſt that ſame *good Thing,* and equally contrary to the Truth of Faith and the Truth of Works.

Methodiſt. What true Methodiſt ever called

called true Faith our *own Faith?* Does not the Scripture ſay, it is the Gift of God?

Churchman. What true Chriſtian ever called good Works our *own* Works? Does not the Scripture ſay, *it is God who worketh in us, both to will, and to do?*—Now if your Faith may be called *good* and *ſaving*, becauſe it is God's Gift and Power within you; then a Chriſtian's Works may be called *good* and *ſaving*, or ſuch as work out his Salvation, becauſe they are all wrought in God, and by his Power working in him.—But now, ſuppoſe one Man to rely on his own Faith, and another to rely upon his *own Works*, they then are both of them carnally minded, and the Faith of the one, and the Works of the other, are equally the ſame worthleſs filthy Rags. —On the other hand, do but (as plain Scripture requires you) aſcribe good Works to the ſame Original, and divine Power, as a right Faith muſt be aſcribed to, and then Faith and Works are equally one Power of God to Salvation, becauſe equally the ſame ſaving, redeeming, and ſanctifying Work of God in our Souls.

Methodiſt. I wonder you ſhould thus ſtrive to puzzle and darken one of the greateſt and moſt plain Truths of the Goſpel. Can any Thing be more plain than the Caſe of the Phariſee, *God, I thank Thee*, that *I am not as other*

other Men are, I faſt twice in the Week, I give Tithes of all that I poſſeſs, &c? Here you have Works pleading their Cauſe.—Now how came the Publican without any Works, ſaying only, *God be merciful to me a Sinner*, to be juſtified *rather* than this good working Phariſee? Can any thing be more deciſive than this?

Churchman. Let it then be ſuppoſed, that the Phariſee had ſaid, God, I thank Thee, that my *Faith* is not like other Mens Faith, it needs not the help of faſting and praying, &c. I aſk you, had this been a better Phariſee than the other? had this boaſting of a Faith, been better than that boaſting of Works? Or might not Chriſt have here juſtly ſaid, that the Publican's *God be merciful to me a Sinner*, had more of God and Goodneſs in it, than the Phariſee's boaſting of his ſolitary Faith?——But now, if ſuch a Paſſage as this, of a Phariſee boaſting of a *Faith* without Works, was to be found in Scripture, and condemned by Chriſt, ſurely it would be great Deluſion to appeal to it, as a full and deciſive Proof of the *Vanity* and Inſignificance of *Faith*, and of its being rejected by Chriſt, as of no Avail.—Yet this would be full as well, as to appeal to what Chriſt ſaid of the Phariſee's boaſted Works, as a full Proof that *Works* are rejected by Chriſt, as worſe than nothing.

Methodiſt. Say what you will, I am fully aſſured of this great Truth, thus expreſſed by our Friend, " That the Moment a Man ſeeks " to be juſtified by his *own Obedience* to God's " Laws, that Moment he falls from Chriſt, " and ceaſes to have an intereſt in him."

Churchman. Here juſt the ſame Anſwer as before, will be ſufficient, viz. that the Moment a Man ſeeks to be ſaved or juſtified by his *own Faith* in God, that Moment he falls from Chriſt, and ceaſes to have an intereſt in him.—This is juſt as good an Argument againſt *Faith* itſelf, as your Friend's is againſt Works. For *own* Faith and *own* Obedience are at the ſame Diſtance from God, and are as mere Works of the Fleſh, as Self-ſeeking and Self-love.—But if your Friend would have ſpoke to the Purpoſe of the Matter in Hand, he ſhould have expreſſed himſelf thus, viz. that the Moment a Man ſeeks to be juſtified, or made acceptable to God, by Works wrought by the Spirit of Chriſt living in him, that Moment he falls from Chriſt, and ceaſes to have an Intereſt in him.—Had he thus expreſſed himſelf, you ſee what an Abſurdity there had been in it, and yet, without thus expreſſing himſelf, his Words are quite foreign to the Matter, and touch not thoſe Works which are affirmed to be eſſential to Juſtifying Faith.—For the true Chriſtain

ſtian Man never thinks, or talks of being juſtified by any *own Obedience*, any more than of being waſhed and ſaved by his *own precious* Blood.—But though he has no own *Obedience*, no own *Works*, any more than he has an own *Will*, and own *Love*, yet he has an Obedience, and Works, and Will, and Love, that reach Heaven, and unite with God. How ſo? It is becauſe by the ſupernatural WORD and SPIRIT of God, come to a Fullneſs of Birth in him, his Obedience, his Works, his Will, his Love, are that which they are, and do that which they do on Earth, to the Glory, and by the ſame Spirit of God, as Angels do in Heaven. —This is the new Creature that is juſtified by Faith and Works. Suppoſe Faith to be not from Chriſt, or Works not from Chriſt, and then they are both of them but Works of the Fleſh.—But add Chriſt to Faith, and Chriſt to Works, and then they are but one and the ſame *Power of God to Salvation*, and all Difference between Faith and Works is loſt, and nothing remaineth, but *Chriſt in us the Hope of Glory*. But your Friend forgetting, or not knowing, that no works are called Salvation-Works, or pleaded for as ſuch, but thoſe that Chriſt worketh in us, conſiders, and confounds all Works as *own Works*, and *ſelfiſh Works*, and ſo condemns

Chriſtian Works, and the Neceſſity of them, upon no other Ground, but becauſe *own Works*, which proceed from ſelf, are falſe, vain, and unprofitable to our Salvation.—Whereas our bleſſed Lord has in the plaineſt Manner diſtinguiſhed them from one another, and ſhewn us *when* and *how* Works are our *own*, and of no Avail before God, and alſo *when* and *how* Works are good and godly, and Works of Salvation, Juſtification, and Sanctification. *When thou doſt thine Alms*, ſaith he, *do not ſound a Trumpet before thee, as the Hypocrites do in the Synagogues, and in the Streets, to be ſeen of Men. Verily I ſay unto you, they have their Reward.* Here you ſee what an *own Work* is, and why it has no Salvation-Goodneſs in it, it is becauſe it is done only to trumpet forth its own Glory. Now where any thing like this Trumpet goes along, either with that which we call Faith, or Works, though it ſhould have ever ſo heavenly an Appearance, it has only the Nature, and can have only the Reward of vain-glorious Alms.—God ſaid to a holy Prophet of old, *Cry aloud, and ſpare not, lift up thy Voice like a Trumpet.* Here is one kind of a religious Trumpet. The Phariſees were learned Men, and full of religious Zeal, and they alſo had their religious Trumpet, which our Lord condemned.—

Therefore Zeal and Trumpeting, are not good, and Things to be truſted to, becauſe they pretend Religion, but may be as different from one another, as a Phariſee is from a holy Prophet.—This ought well to be conſidered by all, who ſet a Trumpet to their Mouths in God's Cauſe; for if all that was alive in the trumpeting Prophet, be not alive in them, and all that was alive in the Phariſee, be not dead in them, they will begin too ſoon, and run before they are ſent by God, to preach of the true Life, and the true Death, to a World ignorant and careleſs about them.—Again, our Lord ſaith, *When thou prayeſt, thou ſhalt not be as the Hypocrites are, for they love to pray, ſtanding in the Synagogues, and in the Corners of the Streets, that they may be ſeen of Men. Verily I ſay unto you, they have their Reward,* and can have no better a Reward, becauſe he that thus prays, makes Prayers an *own Work* of *own Glory*, and therefore they are but an Abomination before God.—But now, will you form hence tell the World, that *Alms and Prayers* are Soul-deſtroying Things, or at beſt but mere filthy Rags, that ſignify nothing to him that uſes them, becauſe ſuch Alms and Prayers are ſaid to be ſo by Chriſt?

For has not Chriſt in this very Place taught you the direct contrary, and ſaid as much

much of the *Salvation-Power* of good Works, as he has ſaid of the Nothingneſs of phariſaical Works?——*When thou doſt thine Alms*, ſaith he, *let not thy left Hand know what thy right Hand doth.* And again, *When thou prayeſt, enter into thy Cloſet, and when thou haſt ſhut thy Door, pray to thy Father which is in Secret*, and thy Father which *ſeeth in Secret, ſhall reward thee openly.*—— Why is all this Secrecy? It is, that the whole Work, may be ſolely from, and to, and for God, and that ſelf may have neither Beginning, nor End, or the leaſt Share in it.—Now I aſk, Have theſe Alms and theſe Prayers nothing of Salvation-Goodneſs in them, when our Lord therefore commands them, that we may thereby obtain a Reward in Heaven? Can they help us to a Reward in Heaven, without helping forward our Salvation? If a heavenly Reward follows ſuch Works as theſe, muſt they not on the ſame Ground, in the ſtricteſt ſenſe of the Words, he called *ſaving* Alms, ſaving Prayers, as any *Faith*, from Adam or Abraham to this Day, can *be called ſaving Faith?*—What are all the Promiſes made to the *Faith* of the Fathers, of a *City that hath Foundations, whoſe Builder and Maker is God?* what is that *better* and *Heavenly Country*, which was to be the Reward of their

their *Faith*, but these very Rewards here promised by Christ to the Works of Christian Alms, and Christian Prayers? Our blessed Lord's whole divine Sermon on the Mount is nothing else but a continual Doctrine of good Works, and a continual Doctrine of such Reward as belong to the faithful diligent Workers.—No blessedness is ascribed to a single Faith, but all along to some one or other goodly Work. *Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain Mercy.—Do good to them that hate you.——Give to him that asketh you.*——But why all this? It is, *that you may be Children of your Father which is in Heaven.*—Surely then such Works as make us to be Children of our Father which is in Heaven, may be said to be *saving Works.*

Methodist. Well, now I fully believe, what a very great Man has often said, that you have not one right Thought or Notion about Justification. But however for once, I must desire you to say, *what*, and *when*, and *where* Justification is.

Churchman. Surely I shall not be much mistaken, if I shall venture to say, it is *then* and *there*, where there is *no Condemnation.* Now St. *Paul* saith, *there is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus.* If you ask him, who are those that are in Christ Jesus?

Jesus? He tells you in the very next Words, they are those *who walk* not *after* the *Flesh, but after the Spirit.*—But no one doth, or can walk after the Flesh, but he that doth the *Works* of the Flesh, nor any one walk after the Spirit, but he who doth the Works of the Spirit.—So then whether you consider Justification, or Condemnation, Works are the whole of the Matter. No Condemnation but from our evil Works, no Justification but from our good Works.—Evil Works are from the Spirit of Satan, working and ruling in our animal Birth of Adam's poisoned Flesh and Blood.——Good Works are from the Spirit of Christ, working in that blessed *Seed of the* Woman, or *incorruptible Seed of* the WORD (common to all Men) till it comes to a Birth of the New Creature, created unto good Works in Christ Jesus.—Thus the Works of the Devil in us are our only Condemnation, and the Works of Christ in us are our only Justification.—And by thy *Works* thou shalt be *justified*, is just the same scriptural, immutable Truth, as by thy Works thou shalt be *condemned*.

Would you see the Truth of Justification, and the Truth of Condemnation, free from all Possibility of Mistake, look how the righteous Judge of all the World will proceed at the last Day.——Mankind are then

to

to be divided into two Sorts of People, the one called *Sheep*, the other *Goats*. To the Sheep, saith Christ, *Come*, ye *blessed* of *my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the Foundation of the World.*—Whence now comes this Blessedness? or how came they to be the blessed Heirs of such a prepared Kingdom? The one sole Reason of it is thus given by Christ, namely, because of their good Works. *For I was an hungred* and *ye gave me Meat, naked and ye cloathed me, sick and in Prison, and ye visited me.* Here you have the last, full, and final Justification ascribed to Nothing else but Works, done in, and by, and for Christ.—Is there here any Room left for you, or any Christian to ask one single Question, or have the least doubtful Thought about Justification, what it is, and how it comes to pass? Can you be taught by an higher Authority, or in plainer Words, that Works, Christian Works, are all the Justification that will stand you in stead at the last Day?

Again, to the *Goats* saith Christ, *Go ye cursed into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Whence now have these Goats their cursed State, that casts them into the Hell of the Devil? The one sole Reason given by Christ, is because they had not done those Works, by which his

Sheep were juſtified and bleſſed, and made to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven.—Here you have the laſt, full, and final Condemnation aſcribed to no one Thing elſe, but the Want of Works. And who is it that teaches you, but He who is the Truth itſelf, and the Father of all Truth, both in Men and Angels?

What occaſion then for ſo many laboured critical Volumes about Faith and Works in order to Juſtification? If you hold more or leſs, or any Thing elſe about Juſtification, than that which Chriſt has here aſſerted, the Spirit of Anti-Chriſt muſt have helped you to it.—For call any Thing a *juſtifying* Faith, but good Works, and then you have your Doctrine as ſurely from Anti-Chriſt, as if you was to hold, that they were the bleſſed Sheep whom Chriſt called *Goats* and *Curſed*. —Chriſt is the one great infallible Teacher about Juſtification, and what He has ſaid in two or three Words about it can no more have any Thing taken from it, added to it, or altered in it, than his laſt Sentence on his Judgment-Seat.—Deceive not yourſelf, my Friend, with a Faith that hath not all its Goodneſs, its Truth, and Perfection, from Works. For what greater Deception can you fall under, than to believe that any Thing can be your Juſtification, or your Condem-

demnation, whilſt you are in the Body, but that which will be your Juſtification, or Condemnation, after you are riſen from the Dead?—Now, after this Determination of Chriſt, that Nothing but *Works* will paſs for *Juſtification* at the laſt Day, look at the Determination made by your Friend, ſaying, in the fulleſt Contradiction to Chriſt, "That "Juſtification by Faith and Works is a moſt "pernicious, papiſtical, and damnable Doc-"trine. Which Doctrine, ſays he, I am "verily aſſured, no one can hold, and be "in a State of Salvation*."

Is not every Word here, in full Condemnation of Chriſt's Doctrine of his Sheep, and their Salvation through Works, as a moſt pernicious and damnable Doctrine, tending to the Deſtruction of all thoſe who believe it, and walk according to it?

For does he who preaches up Salvation by Faith and Works teach any Thing elſe, but that very Doctrine which Chriſt taught when he ſaid, Come, ye bleſſed, becauſe of the Works which ye have done; and go, ye curſed, becauſe wanting the Works which ye ſhould have done.—Say no more then, that *Papiſts*, and *Popiſh* Proteſtants, have invented this damnable Doctrine of Faith and Works.

* Letters, p. 22.

——Chriſt is the Author of it, and he has ſealed it with the ſame Certainty as the Day of Judgment. Your Friend's *Verily aſſured* is quite as outrageous and frantic, as if he had ſaid, *I am verily aſſured*, that Damnation will be the State of all Preachers and Hearers, who do not as fully exclude Works from Juſtification *now*, as Chriſt will require them for Juſtification *hereafter*.

Methodiſt. But pray, Sir, if I am to give up my Friend's Doctrine, muſt I not give up St. *Paul* alſo, as a Deceiver and falſe Apoſtle, for ſo he muſt be if Juſtification is by Works? What are his Epiſtles to the *Romans*, the *Galatians*, and *Epheſians*, but ſo much Pains taken to prove that we are ſaved, or juſtified, by *Faith alone*.

Churchman. I am as much for all St. *Paul*'s Doctrine, as for any other Scripture, and fully believe that he ſaid nothing about Faith, but what he ſaid by the Inſpiration of the holy Spirit.—But if you believe that St. *Paul* ever ſaid one ſingle Word about Faith, as it ſignifies a *ſingle Act*, or *Operation* of the Mind, or ever aſcribed any Good to that, in Oppoſition to Works, or that he ever diſtinguiſhed, or divided *Chriſtian* Faith from *Chriſtian* Works, you may be ſaid to have read him with Eyes that ſee, and Ears that hear not.

Methodiſt. Surely your St. *Paul* and mine cannot be the ſame Perſon, or you could never talk at this Rate.

Churchman. I would aſk you whether St. *Peter* taught a Faith without Works, when he ſaid to the *Jews*, " This is the Stone, " which was ſet at nought of you Builders, " which is become the Head of the Corner. " Neither is there Salvation in any other, for " there is no other Name under Heaven " given among Men, whereby we muſt be " ſaved." Acts iv. 11, 12. Now did it ever come into your Head from reading theſe Words of St. *Peter*, that he there taught a Salvation through Chriſt (that is, through the Goſpel Religion) by Faith without Works? —See alſo what Chriſt himſelf had ſpoken before of this very *Stone*, and the Builders that rejected it; therefore, ſaith he, *I ſay unto you*, the *Kingdom of God*, that is, this very Stone, *ſhall be taken from you, and given to a Nation bringing forth the Fruits thereof.* Matt. xxi. 43. Now would you from theſe Words of Chriſt, on which St. *Peter*'s Words are grounded, have ever thought of proving that the Religion of the Goſpel, called by St. *Peter* the *Head Stone* of the Corner, and by Chriſt *the Kingdom of God bringing forth* its Fruits, muſt be a Religion of *Faith without Works?* What could be more extravagant than this,

and

and yet not more ſo, than to pretend to prove it from any Words of St. *Paul*.—For I defy any one to ſhew, that he hath ever ſaid any more, or other Thing *about Faith alone*, or meant any Thing elſe by it, as our Salvation, but ſtrictly and to a Tittle the ſame which St. *Peter* calls the Stone, or that *Name alone*, by which Salvation is to be had.—St. *Paul*'s *Faith alone*, is Nothing elſe, means Nothing elſe, but the *Goſpel Religion alone*, and only atteſts that divine Truth ſpoken from the Beginning to the End of the New Teſtament, that the Goſpel Diſpenſation, or Religion, *alone*, can be the Salvation of Men.—When St. *Paul* ſpeaks of *Works*, as quite unprofitable, nay hurtful to Salvation, nothing is meant by them, but *Jewiſh* and Heatheniſh Works; and by that Faith, which he oppoſes to them, and ſets up in the Stead of them, he always means the *whole Syſtem* of Goſpel Truths, the *whole Proceſs of* Chriſt, with all the Salvation-Doctrines that belong to it.——This is St. *Paul's Faith alone*, by which we can only be ſaved, juſt the ſame Thing as St. *Peter*'s ſaying, There is no other *Name* under Heaven but this *alone*, by which we can be ſaved.—The only Difference between *Peter* and *Paul* is this, that *Peter*, in his ſhort Expreſſion, calls that the *Name alone* by which we can be ſaved, which

Paul,

Paul, in his ſhort Expreſſion, calls *Faith alone*, and both of them mean the *Whole* of That, which Chriſt calls the Kingdom of God with its Fruits thereof; which Kingdom of God is neither more nor leſs, than the whole Goſpel Syſtem of Chriſt's Proceſs, with all the Benefits and Doctrines eſſential, or belonging to it.

Away then with your idle Fancy of *Paul*'s ever diſtinguiſhing Chriſtian Faith from Chriſtian Works, or ever giving the ſmalleſt Preference of the one to the other.—To the *Jews, who ſaid to Chriſt, what ſhall we do, that we may work the Works of God?* Chriſt ſaith, *This is the Work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath ſent.*—This is St. *Paul*'s ſole and whole Doctrine *about Faith alone*, it is to believe in Chriſt, and that Belief is the whole *Chriſtian Work*, the whole Work that God requires, the whole Salvation-Work. But why ſo? Becauſe to believe in Chriſt is to embrace all and the Whole of that, which Chriſt *was, did, ſuffered, taught, and commanded*, as the one only Salvation of Men.

Methodiſt. I muſt confeſs you have ſaid more than I expected to hear, and more than I can at preſent anſwer. But pray ſhew me how it appears, that St. *Paul* by his *Faith alone* means Nothing elſe but the Chriſtian Religion *alone*, or the Syſtem of Goſpel Doctrines alone.

Churchman.

Churchman. You might as well ask me, how it appears that *Paul* was an Apostle, or Witness of Jesus Christ *alone*; for how could he be an Apostle of Christ *alone*, if he meant any Thing by his *Faith alone*, but the Whole that is meant by the whole Gospel Religion of Christ? Therefore, wherever St. *Paul* ascribes Salvation to *Faith alone*, you have the fullest Proof that he himself could possibly give you, that by Faith *alone* he means neither more nor less than the whole Gospel Religion *alone*.—St. *Paul* has these Words, *God forbid, that I should glory in any Thing, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*.——Here you see all is rejected but the Cross of Christ *alone*, this alone is his Glory, and a good Glory it was; but would not all that is true and good in this Speech of *Paul*'s be perverted and lost, unless by the *Cross alone* you understand the *whole Process, Doctrines, and Precepts*, of a crucified Saviour, that is, the whole Christian Religion? Now thus it is with Faith *alone*; and if *Paul* had said, God forbid that I should glory in any Thing but in Faith alone in Christ, he had said just the same Thing, as when he would have no Glory but in the Cross alone.——For where all that is Christian Joy, or Hope, or Comfort, or Salvation, is ascribed to any one *single Thing*, whether

whether it be called *Faith* alone, or the *Croſs* alone, there that Faith, and that Croſs, muſt ſtand equally, and only for the whole Goſpel-Religion. And then to ſay, that a Man is ſaved by the Croſs alone, or by Faith alone, is the ſame ſound and good Truth.——I know whom I have believed, ſaith the Apoſtle; and if he had ſaid, I know whom I have *followed*, whom I have obeyed, the Thing had been juſt the ſame.——For to *follow* Chriſt, or to be in the *Faith* of Chriſt, or to be a Diſciple of the Croſs, are three different Expreſſions, but the Meaning of them all is but one and the ſame.

I am not aſhamed, ſaith St. *Paul, of the Croſs of Chriſt, juſt the ſame as* if he had ſaid, I am not aſhamed of the *Goſpel Kingdom* of Chriſt. For that he means by the Croſs, the whole Religion of the Goſpel, he tells you, in ſaying, that it is the *Power of God to Salvation*; and what is, or can be this *Power*, but that *whole Proceſs*, Precepts, and Doctrines of Chriſt, which make the whole Religion of the Goſpel? Again, *I have determined*, ſaith he, *to know nothing among you but Chriſt, and him crucified.* But will you thence infer, that all other Knowledge, whether of the Birth, Life, Reſurrection, and Aſcenſion of Chriſt, was rejected by

him as quite uſeleſs and unprofitable? Yet this would be full as well, as to infer, that becauſe he ſaith, by *Faith alone* ye are ſaved, therefore no Works are to be admitted as *ſaving*, but are to be rejected as vain and quite unprofitable to Salvation.——For the Knowledge of Chriſt crucified alone, and Faith alone, are then each of them put for the whole Goſpel-Religion, and not for Faith, as ſignifying a *ſingle Power* of the Mind, nor for the Croſs, as meaning the *ſingle Crucifixion* of Chriſt.

Farther, drop now for a while this Conſideration of Faith in which St. *Paul* has uſed it for the whole Goſpel-Doctrine, and conſider Faith in the Senſe, in which our Lord and the whole Scripture moſt frequently ſpeak of it, as a *living working* Power of the Mind, that *wills*, and *deſires*, and *hopes*, and *truſts*, and *believes*, and *obeys*; and in this Senſe of the Word, it will be abſolutely true, that Works have juſt the ſame Salvation in them, that Faith hath, becauſe in the very Nature of the Thing, Works are of the ſame Nature with, and inſeparable from Faith, let the Faith or Works be what they will, becauſe Faith is nothing elſe, has nothing elſe, but what its Works are.——This is equally true of every Man, and every Faith in the World, he has no Works, but

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the Workings of his faith.——For as *Life* has no Exiſtence but in and by its *living Operations*, ſo Faith hath no Exiſtence, but in its own Workings.——Now if you will have *a life alone* without its *living Operations*, then you muſt have a Life that is without Motion, without Will or Deſire, without Hearing, Seeing, Feeling, or any Inclination to any Thing, and then you have a Life that is juſt as good as a dead Carcaſe——So if you will have a Chriſtian Faith that is *alone*, and not made up of Works, you muſt have a Chriſtian Faith that has no Penitence, no Humility, no Denial of Self, no Hunger after Righteouſneſs, no ſtriving to enter in at the ſtraight Gate, no Love of God, or your Neighbour. For Faith cannot be *alone*, or without Works, till it is without all theſe Workings.——And then you have a Faith alone, that is juſt as able to *fight* St. *Paul's good Fight of Faith*, as the *dead Carcaſe* is to take a City.——And let me tell you, that theſe Works are not only the very Eſſence of Faith, and inſeparable from it, but that Faith itſelf can have no Beginning, but from ſome one, or other of them, nor any further Growth, but as theſe grow more and more. For Faith and its Works beget, and are begotten of one another, for as it muſt be ſaid, that Humility and Penitence are the true

Fruits, or Works of Faith, ſo it may be as truly ſaid, that Humility or Penitence are the *firſt* Root, or Seed, from whence Faith gets its Birth——Faith, conſidered as an Act or Operation of the Mind, is like any other Faculty or Power, it cannot be alone any more than will, deſire, longing, hoping, fearing, wiſhing, loving, truſting, or rejoicing, can any of them be alone, or in a State of Separation from the reſt.——And to aſcribe Salvation to any one of theſe Tempers alone, and by itſelf, would be as conſiſtent with Scripture, and the Nature of the Thing, as to aſcribe it to Faith *alone*, conſidered as a *ſingle* Thing, and ſeparate from all other Works, or working of the Mind.

But Faith, not conſidered as the working of the Will, or an operation of the Mind, but as meaning the whole Syſtem of Goſpel-Religion, may and muſt be *alone* Salvation, without any Thing elſe but itſelf, and that for the ſame Reaſon, as St. *Peter* ſays, that Chriſt *alone* is the *only* Stone, or the *only* Name whereby we can be ſaved.

Would you therefore come out of that Thickneſs of Darkneſs, which a blind *Babyloniſh* Spirit of Diſpute has in theſe latter Ages brought into St. *Paul*'s Doctrine of Faith without Works, this muſt be your way.

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You muſt take or put Faith for the whole Goſpel-Religion, when he oppoſes it to, or ſeparates it from Works, and then you will rightly underſtand why he ſaith, By Faith *alone* ye are ſaved.——You muſt alſo put *Jewiſh*, or Heatheniſh, to the Works which he excludes from Faith, and then you will rightly underſtand *what Works* he declares to have *no Salvation* in them. This is the true, unerring Key to all his whole Doctrine about Faith without Works.

Methodiſt. But where has St. *Paul* himſelf told you, that by Faith alone, he means the whole Goſpel-Religion *alone?*

Churchman. He has told it me, as often, and wherever he has ſaid, that by Faith *alone* we are ſaved. For how could he more ſhew you, that he means neither more nor leſs by it, that by telling you that it alone is Salvation? Would you have Salvation to be obtained by ſomething *different* from the whole of Goſpel-Religion? Fanſy now St. *Paul* explaining himſelf, and ſaying, when I aſcribe Salvation to *Faith alone*, I do not mean by Faith, the whole of Goſpel-Doctrine; what greater Abſurdity could you charge upon him?

His Doctrine of Faith alone, and without Works, is nothing elſe but the Goſpel-Religion alone, in Oppoſition to the Religion and

Works of Jews and Heathens, and is ſolely directed to theſe two ſorts of People, and not, as is blindly imagined, to ſet Chriſtian Faith in Oppoſition to Chriſtian Works, which would be no better, than teaching a Chriſtian to be good without Goodneſs.

To the *Jews*, he thus ſpeaks, *We have believed* in *Jeſus Chriſt, that we might be juſtified* by the Faith of Chriſt, and not by the Works of the Law. Here Faith and Works ſtand for the two Religions, the one of Chriſt, and the other of *Moſes*. For what are the *Works of the Law*, but the whole of the *Moſaic* Religion, or what the *Faith of Chriſt*, but the whole new Religion of the Goſpel? Therefore to tell theſe People, that they were to be ſaved by faith alone, and without Works, was only telling them, that they were to be ſaved by leaving or turning from *Judaiſm* to Chriſtianity, or that they could not enter into the Kingdom of God, or the Goſpel-Faith, or the Church of Chriſt (for they all mean the ſame Thing) till they had done with, and left off all the Works of the Law? I *teſtify*, ſays he, *unto you, that if ye be circumciſed, Chriſt* ſhall profit you nothing.

To the *Heathens*, or *Greeks*, he preaches the ſame Doctrine with Regard to their Religious State, *namely*, that all the Works of

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their Religion and Lives must be forsaken and turned from, that by embracing the Religion, or Faith of Christ, they might be saved.——I have, says he, *kept back nothing that was profitable unto you,—publickly*, and *from House to House, testifying both to the* Jew *and the* Greek, *Repentance towards God, and Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.*—— *Repentance towards God*, signified the Necessity of their having done with their former Religion, Works, and Manner of Life; *Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, signified the Necessity of their becoming Members of a new Gospel-Church, or Kingdom of Jesus Christ.

Not a Word through all St. *Paul* that rejects *any Works*, but those which *Jews* and Heathens were satisfied with, and would not give up for the Gospel State of the Kingdom of God, which Kingdom is called by *Paul* the *Faith of Christ*. Not a Word of the Sufficiency of *Faith alone*, but where it stands for the whole of Gospel-Doctrine.

Again, St. *Paul* hath himself told me, that by *Faith alone* he means the Gospel-Religion alone, in the following Passages, I *have*, says he, *fought the good Fight*, I *have finished* my *Course*, and as a Proof of this, he adds, I *have kept the Faith*. Must not Faith here stand for the whole Gospel-Religion?

——Again,

——Again, *Before Faith came, we were under the Law.* Does not *Faith* here as certainly ſignify t*he whole Religion* of the Goſpel, as the *Law* ſignifies the whole Religion of *Moſes?* Again, *If they who are under the Law be Heirs, then Faith is made void,* that is, the whole Religion of Jeſus Chriſt is made needleſs, and of no Uſe or Benefit. Can he more plainly tell you, that by *Faith,* as oppoſed to the Works of the Law, he means nothing elſe but the whole of the Goſpel-Doctrine? This is ſaid to the *Jews.* —To the Gentles at another Time he ſpeaks the ſame Truth in theſe Words; "*By* "*Grace* ye are ſaved *through Faith in Chriſt,* "and *that not of yourſelves,* not of Works, "*leſt any Man ſhould boaſt,* it is the *Gift* of "God," the very ſelf-ſame Gift, of which Chriſt ſpoke to the woman at *Jacob's* Well, ſaying, *if thou kneweſt the Gift of God, and who it is that ſaith, Give me to drink, thou wouldeſt have aſked of Him, and he would have given thee living Water.*——Now what is this Gift of God with his living Water, but the Chriſt of God with all his redeeming Proceſs, from his Birth to his Aſcenſion into Heaven, freely given by God, that Man might thereby be ſaved. Therefore this *Faith,* or *Gift* of God, by which alone we

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can be ſaved, ſignifies neither more nor leſs than the *whole Goſpel-Means* of Salvation. ——The Apoſtle adds, and *that not of yourſelves, not of Works, leſt any Man ſhould boaſt.* Here Works are totally excluded. But what Works? Why only Works of *ſelf*, and Works that Man could, or would *boaſt of.* But theſe Works are only therefore excluded from Goſpel-Faith or Salvation, that godly Works which have nothing of ſelf, or boaſting in them, may come up in their ſtead.—This the Apoſtle affirmeth, ſaying, *For we are his Workmanſhip, created in Chriſt* Jeſus *unto good Works, which God hath before ordained.* Eph. ii. How great then is that learned Deluſion, which oppoſes Chriſtian Faith to Chriſtian Works, becauſe *Paul* oppoſes it to the unchriſtian Works of *Jews* and Heathens; or becauſe he will not allow their ſeveral Works to have any Salvation in them, therefore will have it, that the true Followers of Chriſt neither can, nor ought to have any Salvation from their doing the Works, which Chriſt has taught and commanded them to do.——A *Believer*, or a *Hearer*, without *doing*, is but one and the ſame ſelf-deceived Perſon.—In the Goſpel we have a Father bidding his Son go to *Work* in his Vineyard. The Son conſents, and ſaith, *I go, Sir, but he went not.* This

conſenting and not doing is the Perfection of a *Faith without Works.*

Methodiſt. Surely you never minded theſe Words of St. *Paul,—To him that worketh not, but believeth on him who juſtifieth the ungodly, his Faith* is counted unto him *for Righteouſneſs.*

Churchman. Surely you have been deaf to all that has been ſaid, or you could never come now with ſuch a Text as this. For no more is ſaid in it againſt working, or againſt any other Works, but that very ſingle Thing which he ſaith in theſe Words, *That by the Deeds of the Law there ſhall no Fleſh* be *juſtified in his Sight.*——Now if it be the Apoſtle's repeated Doctrine, that the Deeds or Works of the Law muſt of all Neceſſity be forborn, or ceaſed from, muſt he not for that very Reaſon ſay, *to him that worketh not,* that is, to him that ceaſeth from working, as the Law, or Religion of *Moſes* requires, and turns to the *Faith of Chriſt,* called the Kingdom of God, this Faith becometh his Righteouſneſs.——But how doth it become his Righteouſneſs? The Apoſtle tells you, *It is through the Redemption that is in Chriſt Jeſus; whom God hath ſet forth to be a Propitiation through Faith in his Blood.*——Now what is the Redemption through Jeſus Chriſt, but a Redemption by and through *all that,* which

which Chriſt, as God-man, was, did, ſuffered, obtained, taught, and commanded, that is, through and by the whole of the Goſpel-Religion? How is Chriſt our *Propitiation*, or Peace, but by *that*, which he is, and does in the inward Change and Renewal of our Nature, in creating us again to good Works, in bringing forth a new Creature, not born of Man, nor of the Will of Man, nor of the Will of the Fleſh, but of God?——What is *Faith in his Blood*, but the ſame Thing as Faith in his Croſs; and what is Faith in either Caſe, but a hearty Willingneſs, and full Deſire wholly to ceaſe, or turn away from all Heatheniſh, or *Jewiſh* Works, and to embrace and give up ourſelves to all that is meant, taught, and required by the Goſpel-Faith, or Kingdom of God?

Would you know the whole of St. *Paul*'s Doctrine about Faith, and againſt Works, or working, you have it all ſummed up by himſelf in the following Words, *Therefore we conclude, that a Man is juſtified by Faith without the Deeds of the Law.* What room then for one ſingle Word about what he means by *not working? Faith* ſtands here for the Goſpel-Religion, and the Deeds of the Law ſignify the Religion of *Moſes*; no Wonder therefore that he ſaith a Man is juſtified by Faith, without the Deeds of the

Law. So ſure therefore as you conclude either more or leſs, or other than St. *Paul*'s own Concluſion, ſo ſure you may be, that you abuſe the Apoſtle, falſify his Doctrine, and ſow your *own Tares* amongſt his *Wheat*.

Methodiſt. Let me here aſk you, in the elegant Words of a late moſt amiable Divine, "Muſt the *Efficacy* of Chriſt's Obedience "be enforced by the *Acceſſion* of our Works, "*maimed* and *Worm-eaten* Things?"

Churchman. There may, for ought I know, be Elegance enough in theſe Words, but Truth and Senſe is quite wanting.——For what have our good Works to do with the *Efficacy of Chriſt's Obedience*, either as to the leſſening, or increaſing of it; or how has his Obedience any thing more added to it by our good Works, than it has any thing taken from it by the evil Works of thoſe who crucified him?—What careful Doer of good Works, ever ſaid or thought after this Manner? "I ſtrive to obey thy Will, "O God, that thereby Chriſt's Obedience "may be made more perfect than it was "in him.—I lift up my Eyes and Heart "towards Heaven, that Chriſt's ſitting there "at thy right Hand, may be more power-"ful than it is in itſelf."

On the other hand, what a wiſe Man of Faith would he be, who ſhould abſtain from

from Prayer, &c. leſt he ſhould ſeem by ſuch Worm-eaten Petitions, to be *adding* ſomething to Chriſt's all-ſufficient Interceſſion in Heaven.—Again, fancy another Man of Faith alone, ſaying thus, " I cannot " have any Care about denying myſelf, " taking up my daily Croſs and following " Thee. I cannot do theſe Things, as " *helping forward* my Salvation, becauſe " that would be no better, than preſuming " to help Thee to be a more full and ſuf- " ficient Saviour, than thou art in thyſelf, " and without my Works."

Can any thing be more abſurd, or irreligious than this? And yet all of it is manifeſtly contained in the elegant Words of your Friend. If we walk as Chriſt walked, and do the ſame Works of Chriſt, we ſhall on *that Account* be rewarded with him.—This is the ſame good Doctrine, as when the Apoſtle ſaith, *If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him.*——Here you ſee our own Sufferings are not only required, but made the Ground of our reigning with our ſuffering Saviour.—But what Man not intoxicated with the Elegance of Words, would call, or look upon this, as *adding* our maimed *Worm-eaten* Sufferings, to make the Sufferings of Chriſt greater and more valuable than they are in themſelves?—As

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ſilly a Thought, as to ſay, that our following of Chriſt is helping him to be the Son of God.

Our bleſſed Lord keeps our Eye continually upon good Works, or Things that we ourſelves are to do. *Strive*, ſays he, *to enter in at the ſtrait Gate*; *Aſk, and ye ſhall receive*; *Seek, and ye ſhall find*; *Knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you.* He does not ſay, all is already gained, received, found, and opened, by what he has done and ſuffered. —Now if this ſtriving, aſking, knocking, &c. were but *maimed Worm-eaten* Things, ſurely it had been better to forbid than to command them. Or if he had ſaid to his Diſciples, that this ſtriving and ſeeking were ſuch maimed Worm-eaten Things, ſurely he had ſaid as much againſt them, and with the ſame Intention of turning them from them, as when he bid them *beware of the Leaven of the Phariſees*, and compared their Goodneſs to *whited Sepulchres*, full of Stench, Corruption, and dead Men's Bones.

You vehemently accuſe the Clergy with acting contrary to the *Articles* of the Church, becauſe preaching up Juſtification by Faith along with Works. But you quite forget, that your making Chriſtian Works no better than maimed Worm-eaten Things, ſtands in full Contrariety to many of the beſt

Prayers

Prayers in our *Liturgy*.—Thus, how many *Collects* are like this, *Grant, O Lord, that by thy holy Inſpiration we may think thoſe things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the ſame.*——Is this Prayer in vain; or if God hears us, can no better Works come from it than Worm-eaten Things?——Agreeable to this Prayer St. Paul ſaith, *I can do all Things through Chriſt that ſtrengtheneth me*; the ſame may every one ſay as well as He; but according to your new Light, *theſe all Things* are but Worm-eaten Things.

Again, what Difference is there between the *old Man and his Deeds*, which we are to put off, and the new Man in Chriſt, that is to be put on, if he has no Deeds but what are maimed Worm-eaten Things? ——But hear now what Chriſt ſaith of *the Neceſſity*, the *Excellence*, and *Efficacy* of Chriſtian good Works, in the following Words, *Whoſoever heareth my Sayings and DOETH them, is like a Man which built an Houſe, and digged deep, and laid the Foundation on a Rock.* And *when the Floods aroſe, the Stream beat vehemently upon that Houſe, and could not ſhake it, for it was founded upon a Rock.*——Here you ſee the Excellence, the Power, and Efficacy of Chriſtian good

Works, compared by our Lord to the Strength and Firmneſs of a Houſe built upon a Rock, which Floods and Tempeſts cannot overthrow. How could he more fully ſhew you, that they are the *Beginning*, the continual Strength and Support of the divine Life, than by comparing them to a Rock on which a Houſe begins, and from which it hath all its Power of ſtanding againſt all Floods and Tempeſts? How could he better ſhew you, that *this Rock* of good Works, all proceeding from his Power within us, is that *very Rock*, on which he builds a Church, againſt which the Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail?——On the other Hand, call any Thing Salvation but *Chriſtian Works*, and then you have Chriſt's Word for it, that you are *like the Man that without a Foundation built his Houſe upon the Sand, againſt which the Stream did beat vehemently, and immediately it fell, and great was the Fall of it.*——Hear again what our Lord ſaith of Chriſtian Works, *A good Man*, ſaith he, *out of the Treaſure of his Heart bringeth forth that which is good*; but how could this poſſibly be, if Chriſtian Works could be no better than *maimed worm-eaten* Things?—And here by the by, let me deſire you *well to obſerve*, whence it is, that the *good Man bringeth*

bringeth forth good Things. Not as your Orator tells you, becauſe Chriſt's Goodneſs, or Righteouſneſs is outwardly *imputed* to him, and ſo made his. No, Truth itſelf tells you the direct contrary, that it proceeds from the *good Treaſure of his Heart*, and therefore is a Goodneſs born within him. Now, whence has he this good Treaſure of his Heart, and what is it? It is that Treaſure of a *divine Life*, or Nature, which *Adam* had at firſt, and to which he died, and which by the free Grace and Mercy of God was ſecured to him and all his Poſterity, as a *Seed of the Woman*, a preſerved Remains, or Power of his firſt divine Nature.—Chriſt in *Adam* was his firſt Glory and Perfection of Life; Chriſt remaining in fallen *Adam*, as a preſerved Seed of his firſt divine Nature, is the only Ground and Foundation of his being able to be made again in Chriſt a new Creature.—This divine *Seed of the Woman* is ſo much of Chriſt remaining in him; and thence it is, that Chriſt alone hath Power to be the Mediator and Redeemer of Man, becauſe that which is to be raiſed from Death into Life in us is Nothing elſe but the *incorruptible Seed* of himſelf in us.—This, Sir, is that *good Treaſure of the Heart*, out of which the good Man bringeth forth good Things, and is in itſelf nothing more or leſs

than a Seed of *Adam*'s firſt divine Life within us, preſerved by God's never-ceaſing Love towards Man, as his *Covenant* of Grace and Redemption within us, which Seed, as it comes through the Mediation of Chriſt to a new Power of Life in us, cauſes all thoſe *different Senſibilities*, called Humility, Penitence, Fear, Prayer, Faith, Hope, and earneſt ſeeking after God.

Will you now ever ſay a Word more about your Fiction of an *outwardly imputed* Goodneſs, when Chriſt hath ſo expreſsly told you, that its Birth is from within, from the *good Treaſure of the Heart*, which is himſelf within us. And to ſhew that all muſt come from this divine Root preſerved within us, as good Fruit doth from a good Tree, he ſaith, *Either make the Tree good*, and *its Fruit good*, or *make the Tree corrupt*, and *its Fruit corrupt*.—*For* (N. B.) *the Tree is known by its Fruit*.——No, ſay your Imputation-Doctors, that need not be; Let ſome good Hand only hang good Fruit outwardly upon it, and then you will rightly know the Tree by its Fruits.—And it will be more glorious to the Tree to have a Variety of good Fruit outwardly imputed to it or hung upon it, than to have good Fruit from its own good Root.

Methodiſt. Our preſent Matter is not about the Doctrine of Imputation.——If you will

not

not ſtick cloſely to the Point of Faith alone, I muſt beg Leave to depart.

Churchman. The Doctrine of the outward Imputation of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, and the Doctrine of Faith alone, is but one and the very ſame individual Point; for what is your Faith alone but a Faith in that imputed Righteouſneſs?

The Righteouſneſs of Chriſt we muſt have, or he can be no Saviour to us. This is granted on both ſides.—But you, for the great Glory of God, and the great Good of Man, are for having it only *outwardly* imputed to us; which is juſt ſuch a Glory to God, and would be ſuch a Good to a blind Man, as if inſtead of opening his own Eyes, only the good far-ſeeing Eyes of an Angel were outwardly imputed to him.

On the other Hand, we believe, and contend for an *inward Birth* of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs in us, becauſe it was the Birth of our firſt glorious Father, and becauſe it is to the eternal Glory of God, and the eternal Good of Man, that his inward ſinful Nature be quite deſtroyed by a Birth of his *original* Righteouſneſs riſing up in its Stead; that ſo, all that was loſt in *Adam* may be found again in Chriſt.—Can you poſſibly be told this in ſtronger Terms, than when Chriſt ſaith, *Except a Man be born again from above,*

of the Spirit, he *cannot enter into the Kingdom of God?*—St. *John* beareth Witneſs to this Truth, ſaying, *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit Sin*; the ſame as ſaying, till a Man is born of God, he continueth under the Power of his ſinful Nature. But why does ſuch a Man not ſin? The Apoſtle tells you, becauſe *his Seed*, that is, the Seed of God, *remaineth in him.*—Had St. *John* the leaſt Thought of a Righteouſneſs of Chriſt outwardly imputed, when he places all our Freedom from Sin and Power over it, to a *Seed of God remaining* in us? Or if he had ever heard of ſuch a Thought in other People, how could he more fully condemn it, than in ſaying, *Little Children, let no Man deceive you, he that doth Righteouſneſs is righteous, even as he is righteous.*

Here you ſee all is Deceit, be they Notions, Opinions, Faiths, Hopes, imputed Righteouſneſs, or whatever elſe you can name, all is Deceit, till a Man by *doing Righteouſneſs* is righteous even as he is righteous. Then it is that Chriſt's Righteouſneſs is become his Righteouſneſs, and this alone is the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt that is his full and only Juſtification in the Sight of God; and that for this one Reaſon, becauſe it is Chriſt himſelf, that is, his divine and righteous Nature born within him. Which the

Apoſtle

Apoſtle thus ſtrongly aſſerts, *If ye know that he is righteous*; what follows from this Knowledge? The Apoſtle adds, then *ye know that every one that doth Righteouſneſs* (N. B.) *is born of him*, that is, hath a Birth of his divine and righteous Nature brought forth in him; and conſequently, he that is not born of him hath Nothing of Chriſt's Righteouſneſs—to be his Salvation.

Methodiſt. I muſt ſay again, that you ramble ſtrangely about with Multiplicity of Words.——Our Doctrine is, that Works have no Share in ſaving us, becauſe, as our Friend ſtrongly expreſſes it, "Chriſt will "either be a whole Saviour, or none at "all."

Churchman. Had your Friend ſaid, We can have no Salvation but in Chriſt alone, he had ſaid a good Scripture-Truth; but this ſtrange unſcriptural Language of a Chriſt who will either be a *whole Saviour* or *none at all*, has the ſame bad Meaning in it, as if he was to ſay, Chriſt will do nothing for us, unleſs we forbear to concur, or do any Thing along with him.

Now Chriſt ſaith, *Follow me*,—*Take my Yoke upon you.* But if following of Chriſt, if taking his Yoke upon us, is neceſſary, then ſomething that is to be done by ourſelves is as neceſſary to our Salvation, as that which

is

is done by Christ for us, and some Works are as truly *Salvation-Works*, as any Acts of Faith are saving.

Methodist. Who ever denied, that we are to follow Christ, and take his Yoke upon us?

Churchman. But will such Works do us any Good, or recommend us to God?

Methodist. I will give you no Answer, but in the decisive Words of our Friend; "If, "says he, you think that you have any good "Service of your own to *recommend* you to "God, you are *certainly* without any Inter-"est in Christ."

Churchman. Own Service is but like *own Will*, and no more Good can come from it, than from the *natural old Man* with his Deeds. But our Saviour has assured us, that there is a good Man, who out of the good Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth that which is good.——Now these are the good Works that are pleaded for as absolutely necessary, and essential to a true and saving Faith.

Say now, that if we think such good Works recommend us to God, we are *certainly without* any Interest in Christ, and then it were better that you should preach such Doctrine to Stocks and Stones, than to Christian Ears.—For who can receive it, without

without giving up the moſt conſtant and repeated Salvation-Doctrines of Scripture?—What more frequent through all our Bible, than Paſſages of the ſame Nature with this; *To do good, and to communicate, forget not.* (N. B.) *For with ſuch Sacrifices God is well pleaſed.*——Now muſt a Man who believes this, and thinks that ſuch Things recommend him to God, be therefore certainly without any Intereſt in Chriſt?

Hear Chriſt himſelf thus calling out for good Works in all thoſe who expect to have any Intereſt in him, *Not every one that ſaith unto me, Lord, Lord, ſhall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doth the Will of my Father which is in Heaven.*

Will ſuch a Caller upon the Lord, without good Works, have his ſufficient Excuſe, by ſaying, Lord, I thought thou wouldeſt be my *whole Saviour, or none at all*; and therefore, I durſt not think of *recommending* myſelf to God, by doing his Will, leſt I ſhould thereby loſe all Intereſt in Thee.

Methodiſt. If you do not like my Friend's Expreſſion, take the ſame Truth in other Words of ſome moſt excellent Divines. Thus ſays one, " Nothing is required in or-
" der to our Participation of Chriſt and his
" Benefits;—there is no clogging Qualifi-
" cation, no Worth to be poſſeſſed, no Duty

" to

" to be performed, in order to our full Par-
" ticipation of Chriſt and all his Riches;"
for all which he gives this ſolid Reaſon,
becauſe, " It is not a Matter of Bargain, nor
" the Subject of Sale, but a *Deed* of *Gift*,
" the Gift of Righteouſneſs; and Gifts we
" all know are not to be purchaſed but re-
" ceived."

Churchman. As wild and extravagant Words as ever met together, as may thus be fully ſhewn.—Chriſt ſaid to his Diſciples, *I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life*; and that they might more fully underſtand the true Meaning of that, he ſaid alſo, *Straight is the Gate, and narrow is the Way that leadeth to Life.*——Now what Chriſt here ſaith of the ſtraight Gate and narrow Way, is ſtrictly ſo much ſaid of himſelf, and how he is the Saviour of the World; for the Way and Gate could not lead to Life, if they meant any thing elſe but Chriſt himſelf.—Now Chriſt and his Benefits, conſidered as the bleſſed ſtraight Gate, and narrow Way to Life, provided by God, is wholly and ſolely the free Grace and Gift of God; here was no Bargain or Sale of any Thing; Nothing was done on Man's Part to obtain it, and that for this very good Reaſon, becauſe Chriſt was thus given by God before the Foundation of the World,

and again, before there was a Man born of a Woman.

See then the miſerable Deluſion of your Doctors, who, from this Scripture-Truth, that God has *freely*, and out of *mere Mercy* to the fallen State of Man, provided and given a bleſſed narrow Way, and ſtraight Gate to eternal Life, thence conclude, that no Pains, or Trouble of ſtriving to get into this narrow Way, and through this ſtraight Gate, need be taken, (N. B.) becauſe without any Pains of our own, he freely gave it to all Mankind; though there could be no Bleſſedneſs in the Gift, but becauſe bleſſed are they who with all their Powers, Works, and Endeavours of Spirit, Soul, and Body, ſtrive to walk in this narrow Way, and paſs through this ſtraight Gate.—Is not all this as groſs a Deluſion, and in as full Contrariety to the Nature of the Thing, as to conclude, that becauſe God has *freely* prepared and given us a Cup of Salvation, therefore there is no Need that we ſhould drink it; or think that our *own drinking* it need not be added to make his free Cup of Salvation a Benefit to us.

Now, groſs as all this is, it is the ſtrong Foundation-Abſurdity, on which alone your great Divines build all their rhetorical Flouriſhes of a Salvation that is wholly the Gift

of God, without any Works of Man belonging to it.——For they have not a Word to ſay againſt Salvation-Works, but that Works did not produce God's *firſt free Gift* of a Saviour to us; and therefore, Works can no more belong to this free Gift of a Saviour, after he is given, than they did before he was given to us; being too ſyſtematically blind to ſee, that as a ſtraight Gate and narrow Way were only given to us, that we might do that which we could not do before they were given, or as the Cup of Salvation is only given, that we might drink that which could not drink before it was given, ſo Chriſt was only and ſolely given for the ſake of Salvation-Works, which we could not do, till in him and by him we became new Creatures, created again unto good Works.

How eaſily may you now ſee the Vanity of theſe, and ſuch-like flouriſhing Words; "The Gifts of the great eternal Sovereign "are intended, not to recognize our imagi- "nary Worth, but to aggrandiſe our Views "of his Mercy and Grace."

Juſt as full of Scripture Truth, and good Senſe, as to ſay, that God's Gifts of *Five* and *Ten* Talents, are not given us with this Intention, that our good Uſe of them may appear, and that God may have Occaſion to

ſay

ſay to us, *Well done, good and faithful Servant*, but to ſhew us how great are the Talents and Riches of God. Or again, that God's Gift of a ſtraight Gate and narrow Way to Life is not given us, that our well ſtriving to walk in it may appear, but only that the Greatneſs of God's Goodneſs to us may be ſhewn thereby.

See again, what the ſame Writer ſays of the Man who is in the Truth of the Goſpel; "He labours neither firſt nor laſt to acquire "any Requiſite to Juſtification." When Chriſt himſelf has told him, *By thy Words thou ſhalt be juſtified, and by thy Words thou ſhalt be condemned:* Surely, this is enough telling him, that from *firſt* to *laſt* nothing but Works have either Juſtification or Condemnation in them.——See again what another of your excellent Divines ſaith, "Do "not think by any preparatory Works to "make yourſelves worthy of Chriſt." What is this but ſaying, do not believe Chriſt when he is ſpeaking of Worthineſs and Unworthineſs, when he ſays, *He that taketh not his Croſs and followeth me, is not worthy of me.—He that loveth Father and Mother more than me, is not worthy of me.*—Do not believe St. *Paul*, when he exhorteth the *Theſſalonians to walk worthy of God, who hath called them to his Kingdom and Glory.*—Again,

have a care of these Words of Christ, *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand*; for you may easily thereby be led to think, that Repentance-Works have some Kind of worthy Preparation in them to make *you fit* for the Kingdom of God.

And now let me tell you, that two or three old Heresies joined together, would not more abuse and contradict the Gospel, than your three Doctrines, (1.) Of Faith without Works. (2.) Of a Righteousness of Christ only outwardly imputed to us. (3). Of absolute Election and Reprobation. These are the Scandal and Reproach of the Reformation, wherever they are found, and have nothing to support them, but that implicit Adherence, and systematic Obstinacy, which keep Romish Scholars steady to a *Trent-Creed*.

Gospel-Salvation is on God's Part a Covenant of free Grace and Mercy, and cannot possibly be any Thing else; on Man's Part it is wholly a Covenant of Works, and cannot possibly be any Thing else.—For the sake of Works Man was that which he was by his *Creation*: for the sake of Works he is all that he is by his *Redemption*.—Works are the Life of the Creature, and he can have no Life better or worse then his Works: That which he does, that he is.

THIS

THIS DO AND THOU SHALT LIVE is the *Law of Works*, which was from the Beginning, is now, and always will be, the *one Law of Life*.——And whether you consider the Adamical, Patriarchal, Legal, Prophetic, or Gospel State of the Church, DOING is ALL. Nothing makes any Change in this. Nay, it is not only the one Law of all Men on Earth, but of all Angels in Heaven.——And this as certainly, as our best and highest Prayer is this, *Thy Will be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*.

This do, and thou shalt live, was the only Law of Life given to Adam in Paradise.—*Adam* could not have been capable of this Law but because the divine Nature, or a Birth of Christ within him, was his first created State.—No Law of doing God's Will could have been given to, or received by any of his Posterity, but because a Seed of the first divine Life, or Christ in Man, was by God's free Grace and Mercy preserved and continued in *Adam*, and secured to all his Posterity, as a redeeming *Seed of the Woman*, which through all Ages of the Church, should continue bruising the Head of the Serpent, till this first Seed of Life became a God incarnate, with all Power in Heaven and on Earth, to restore original Righteousness

neſs, and to raiſe again in fallen Man that firſt Birth of himſelf, which was in *Adam* before he fell; This was the one *Power that he gave them to become Sons of God.*

Methodiſt. Nothing more need be ſaid againſt all your Doctrine, but that it is direct *Arminianiſm.*

Churchman. Do you think then, that no more need be ſaid in Defence of your Doctrine, than that it is *true Calviniſm?* I have appealed to nothing for what I have aſſerted, but to the Words of Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and would no more conſult a *Calvin*, an *Arminius*, or a *Zinzendorf*, how I was to underſtand them, than I would pray to God to be led by their Spirit inſtead of the Spirit of Chriſt. Nor is the one a Whit better or worſe than the other.—Chriſt ſaid, *He that hath Ears to hear, let him hear.*—And again, He that is of *God, heareth God's Words.*—If therefore you want hearing Ears, or are not of God, to conſult a Grammarian how you are to underſtand the Words of Chriſt, is as ſure a Way as you can take to be content with ſpiritual Deafneſs and Blindneſs, and never to be taught of God ſo long as you live.

If I have called the *Law of Works* the one Law of Life, it is becauſe Chriſt hath ſaid the ſame to the Lawyer, who aſked him,

him, *what he ſhould do to inherit eternal Life.* Chriſt aſked him, *What is written in the Law?* He anſwered, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, Soul, Spirit, and Strength, and thy Neighbour as thyſelf.* To which Chriſt ſaid, *Thou haſt anſwered right,* THIS DO AND THOU SHALT LIVE. Here you have juſt the ſame Thing ſaid of Works, as is ſaid of Faith; The *Juſt ſhall live by Faith.* Therefore you can have no fuller Proof given you, that Faith and Works mean but one and the ſame Thing, whenever Life is ſometimes aſcribed to one, and ſometimes to the other, and therefore Faith and Works can no more be two Things, than eternal Life can be two Things.—— Again, hear how St. *Paul* aſſerteth the *Law of Works* to be the one Law of Life. For *we muſt all appear before the Judgment-Seat of Chriſt, that every one may receive the Things* DONE *in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.* Now, if you have *your Senſes ſo exerciſed to diſcern between Good and Evil,* as to think that the Law of Works aſſerted by Chriſt, and his Apoſtle to be the Law of Life, is fitter to be received, or not received, juſt as a *Calvin,* or an *Arminius,* are with it, or againſt it, where muſt you look for the People,

People, who have Eyes and ſee not, Ears and hear not.

Methodiſt. I am quite tired with diſputing in this Manner, but yet will add one Thing, which you will not be ſo able to puzzle, as you have the Scripture, and which muſt be acknowledged to be deciſive, at leaſt with Regard to our awakened Preacher. He heard a Voice (as he really thought from Heaven) ſaying unto him, *Ceaſe from thine own Works.*

Churchman. Whenceſoever the Voice came, it ſpoke well, and might have been juſt as beneficial to him, as if it had ſaid, Ceaſe from thine *own Wiſdom*, thine *own Faith*, or thine *own Projects* in Religion; for all theſe are not only alike, but the very ſame Thing. But if he took an Advice to ceaſe from his *own Works*, to be an Advice to ceaſe from Works that were not his own, it is much to be feared he miſunderſtood his Adviſer.

If the Voice had ſaid, Ceaſe from thine *own Faith*, would he have taken this to be a ſufficient divine Authority, to call the Chriſtian World to a Religion of Works *without Faith*, and to have told them of the damnable Doctrine of adding Faith to Works? Yet this would be full as well, as to preach againſt good Works, as having no

Salvation-Goodneſs in them, becauſe he was bid to ceaſe from his *own Works*.

If you knew a *Miniſter* ſo full of Expectation from his own Works, as to be quite uneaſy at their Inſignificance for many Years, both with regard to himſelf and his Hearers, ſuch a Man might well be ſaid to have his Eye too much upon his own Works, to miſtake the Nature of them, and to expect that from them, which can only be done by quite another Power.—To ſuch a Man as this, how wholeſome would the Advice be, *Ceaſe from thine own Works?* And why ſo? Becauſe thou canſt neither be thine own Saviour, nor the Saviour of them that hear thee, by any Thing that can be called thine own Work.——If therefore your fruitleſs Preacher, inſtead of making a Diviſion between Faith and Works, in order to preach with divine Succeſs, had ſaid to himſelf, and to his Hearers, We have hitherto lived and laboured in vain, becauſe (as the Prophet ſpeaks) *we have committed two Evils; we have forſaken the Fountain of living Water, and hewed out to ourſelves broken Ciſterns that can hold no Water*; Now when, or how may we be ſaid to have *forſaken the Fountain of living Water?* It is when we expect or ſeek for Good in any Thing, but that which God is, and does

by his own WORD, LIGHT, and SPIRIT within us.——Look after any Thing but this, have any Truſt in, or Dependence upon any Thing elſe but this divine Operation, and then be as full of religious Zeal as you will, you have forſaken the Fountain of living Water.——Collect, divide, diſtinguiſh, and new-model all Doctrines, Notions, and Opinions, as nicely as ever you can, you are only making a new faſhioned cracked Ciſtern that can hold no living Water in it.——What is the Reaſon that Sin and Wickedneſs overflow, like a Flood, the whole Chriſtian World? It is becauſe Popiſh, and Proteſtant Churches, have been, Age after Age, wholly taken up in hewing out of the Goſpel-Rock their ſeveral Opinion-Ciſterns. The Pope has his Infallibility, and therefore his Ciſterns can have no Failure, or Crack in them.—Proteſtants have a *Luther*, a *Calvin*, an *Arminius*, a *Beza*, a *Socinus*, a *Zinzendorf*, &c. And if their Ciſterns are free from Cracks, it is becauſe they have *Nouns* and *Pronouns*, *Verbs* and *Adverbs*, *Prepoſitions* and *Conjunctions*, to cement and ſtrengthen them. ——What Infallibility does in Popiſh, that Criticiſm does in Proteſtant Countries, and ſo (ſad Truth!) the one *Fountain of living Water* is every where *forſaken*, and quite out

out of Date. What Wonder then, if Chriſtianity is but an empty Name, a vain Battle of Opinions, inſtead of the Life and Power of God, born, dwelling, and manifeſted in our fallen Nature? And here let me tell you, that all that you ſee, or hear, or read of the beſt Notions, Truths, or Doctrines, whilſt you place any Thing in them, as conſidered in themſelves, are to you only broken Ciſterns, that afford you no Water of Life. *Eugenius* ſaid one Day, how charmed he was at *firſt* with the Doctrines of the ſpiritual Life, and the Glories of a new Birth; but that now, after ſome Years ſtriving to be good by the Knowledge of ſuch Things, he found himſelf to be but juſt where he was, before he knew any Thing of them.——But did any one ever tell *Eugenius*, that *theſe Doctrines* were the *Fountain of living Water*, and that by drinking of them he would have *eternal Life?* ——How good are theſe Words of Chriſt, *Unleſs a Man be born again from above, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God?* But how uſeleſs are they to him, who is not thereby turned to ſeek and expect it all from God? How good is it to know that Abyſs of Death, into which our Father *Adam* has plunged us; but how unprofitable is this Knowledge, unleſs it makes us all hunger

and thirſt after that eſſential Operation of the divine Nature in us, which lived in *Adam* before he fell?——All Scripture-Doctrines, whether of Life or Death, are nothing in themſelves, nor have any Power of Godlineſs in them, but are only to ſhew us, again and again, this great Truth, that the Departure from God into whatever it be is the Death of Deaths; and the cleaving wholly and ſolely to God is eternal Life.

Think of any Thing but God as the Cauſe of Goodneſs; or that his Goodneſs can be your Good, but by being born in you as it was in *Adam* and holy Angels, and then, though you have all the three Chriſtian Creeds, you have turned your Chriſtian-God into an outward Idol.——For a God, not living and working within you all that is, or can be called your good Life, is but an outward Idol of a God.——And be aſſured of this, that as is the Birth and working Life within, ſo are you, and can neither *here*, nor *hereafter*, be any Thing elſe but *that* which is *born within you*.——Righteouſneſs imputed from without is but like ſuch imputed Wickedneſs.—And you may as well fright yourſelf with fearing, that the Devil's Wickedneſs ſhould be outwardly imputed to you, as to think of having any Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, but that which of him and by him is *born in you*.

But

But to return to *Eugenius:* let it be ſuppoſed, that having found himſelf not ſanctified by his former Notions, that he had Recourſe to others quite contrary them; as Faith without Works:——Chriſt's Righteouſneſs, not as a new Birth in us, but only outwardly imputed to us:—The Number of Saved and Damned to all Eternity, neither greater or leſs than God's abſolute Decrees had made it. Suppoſe him now ſo charmed with the ſweet Sound of theſe Doctrines, to be under ſuch a Senſe of their ſaving Power, as to be forced to come forth as a Preacher of eternal Death and Damnation to all, that would not ſeek to be ſaved by them——Could *Eugenius* poſſibly give fuller Proof, that he had forgotten and forſaken the one *Fountain of living Water*, and was calling the Chriſtian World to a *rotten Ciſtern* inſtead of it?

Methodiſt. This Kind of reaſoning comes too late; God has already ſet his Seal to the Truth and Goodneſs of our Friend's preaching: Thouſands from far and near flock about him.——Sighs, Groans, Swoonings, Screamings of young and old, proclaim the two-edged Sword that is in his Mouth. If you will not allow this to be Proof enough, it is in vain to talk any farther with you.

Church-

Churchman. All this is so far from being Proof enough of the Truth and Goodness of his Doctrine, that it is no Proof at all. If it will do for him, it will do for *Mahomet*, and every successful Deceiver.

Zinzendorf has Plenty of this Proof. Not only these Kingdoms, but great part of *Europe* and *America*, bear Witness to it. ——And yet of these *Moravians*, carrying Conviction wherever they go, and gaining such awakened Converts out of every Part of the Reformation, as are ready to sell Lands and Houses, and lay the Price at their Feet, of these, your Friend says, he bears a *preaching Testimony against their corrupt Principles and Practices, and might as well be called a Murderer as a Moravian.* What becomes now of your Success, as being God's Seal set to the Truth of your Doctrine?

If *Rome* was allowed to send her preaching Missionaries among us, to attack with full Liberty of Speech every Protestant Form of Religion, to travel from Place to Place, daily telling all the Men and Women they could get together, on Hills, in Church-Yards, or else-where, that dreadful Soul-destroying Doctrines had been constantly preached to them ever since the Reformation; that they had lost all Interest in Christ ever since they left the Pope; that Church and Sects,

Sects, however setting themselves above one another, were all equally in a certain State of Damnation, and must be so, till they had true Priests and true Sacraments, no where to be had but in the one ancient infallible Mother-Church of *Rome*. If I should say, that Damnation thus thundered out, to awaken People from their Reformation-Dream of Safety, would soon have Converts ten times more numerous, and much greater Crouds of various Followers than you have yet to boast of, who could have any Shew of Reason to deny it?

Methodist. Poor Man! Can you not see the miserable and wretched State of Christendom, that Heathen Wickedness reigns every where, that nothing of Christianity is left among us but an outward Profession, destitute of every Goodness but that of Words and Doctrines? How then ought you to rejoice, that the Mercy of God has here and there raised up awakened Preachers, to shake the hardened Hearts of such apostate Christians? Who, that has any Spark of Goodness in him, would endeavour to stop their Course?

Churchman. Whoever would, I am sure I would not.—I wish from my Heart, that not only every Parish, but every House had such a divine Preacher in it.——Nay, though

though ſome ſhould preach Chriſt out of Envy, and others thro' Striſe, yet I would rejoice, if ſuch contentious Preachers did but preach the Truth as it is in Jeſus.—— But now ſuppoſing (as is but too true) that we have only the Words and Doctrines, but not the Spirit of the Goſpel, what is to be done to this fallen State of Chriſtians, but that which was done to Jews and Heathens, who had not yet embraced the Goſpel? For if Chriſtians have loſt the Spirit of Chriſtianity, they are in the State of thoſe that never had it, and muſt be called to that ſame Change of Life as they were, before they can be Chriſtians in Spirit and in Truth.

The Goſpel thus began, REPENT, *for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand.* This Kingdom was God's free Gift; his own Love was the ſole Cauſe of it; but it was only given to *Repentance*, becauſe Nothing elſe could poſſibly receive it. This *Repent*, in order to the Kingdom of God, was the only preaching which Chriſt ſet on Foot, and ſent into every City and Village.—But what do your Preachers now ſay? Do they call the preſent unchriſtian World, as Chriſt ordered the unchriſtian World to be called, to the Kingdom of God? Do they ſay to Chriſtians become Workers of Iniquity, that have long reſiſted God's holy Spirit, long abuſed

abuſed all Goſpel-Bleſſings, trampled all its Pearls under their Feet, and ever ſince their Baptiſm been wallowing in the Mire of their ſenſual Luſts; do they cry aloud to theſe miſerable Sinners, Repent, and bring forth Works meet for Repentance, or it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrha at the Day of Judgment than for you? So far from this, that they teach and affirm with Vehemence to all theſe Sinners, that no Repentance, no Qualifications, no Requiſite, no Preparation, is neceſſary *to put them in full Poſſeſſion of Chriſt and all his Riches*; and all for this abſurd Reaſon, Becauſe Righteouſneſs, that is, the *Means* of Righteouſneſs, is the free Gift of God, and was not procured, or obtained by any Works of Men, therefore Salvation can require no Works of Man.——Who can be blinder than he, who ſees not the Difference between a Saviour prepared and given, and that *Salvation* which is to be from him? Or who can more confound the moſt diſtinct Things, than he who affirms that of Salvation, which is only true of the Saviour alone. ——It is true of the Saviour to ſay, that he is freely given of God to be the Saviour of all Men; but it is not true to ſay of *Salvation*, that it is freely given to all Men.

The Works of Man do no more towards making Chriſt to be the all-ſufficient Saviour of the World, than towards making him to be God and Man; but to have Salvation from this free-given perfect Saviour, all is requiſite, all is to be worked, laboured, and done, which he commands us to have, and do, and be. Therefore ſaith St. *Paul* of this perfect Saviour, *that he is the Author of Salvation* (N. B.) *to all that obey him.* ——Here you ſee what an Error it is, to ſpeak of Saviour and Salvation, as one and the ſame Thing, equally free and independent on Man's Works. The perfect all-ſufficient Saviour is the free Gift of God, that all Men might be ſaved: but Salvation is no free Gift, but ſtands in the utmoſt Contrariety to it; it is to be purchaſed. A Saviour you cannot, you need not buy; he is already given you without Price and without Money; but all the Salvation that you can have muſt be bought of this Saviour, their is Nothing gratis here. But what are you to give for it? All that you have from fallen *Adam*, all that the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil, have treaſured up in you; nay, Houſes, Lands, Fathers, Mothers, Brethren, &c. are all to be forſaken, they muſt all of them loſe that Place and Power that they had in you, or you have no Salvation, though

though you never wanted a free-given Saviour.——Think of coming to Christ without these Requisites, these Qualifications, these Preparation-Works, and then you will be just as welcome as the prodigal Son would have been, had he come to his heavenly Father with his Harlots in his Arms, that he and they might have Rings and the best Robes put on them, without their giving or doing any Thing for them.——What now is the Parable of all that Penitence of the Prodigal, his Renunciation of himself, his forsaking his Way of Life, his Sense of his great Unworthiness to have his first Sonship, his begging to be admitted to the Labour and Obedience of an hired Servant, what is all this for, but to tell every Son of fallen *Adam*, that he is this very Prodigal, this Keeper of Harlots, living with the like Swine in a strange Country, till he thinks of going to Christ with all those Qualifications, Preparations, and Changes of Life and Manners, with which the Prodigal Son went to his Father?——May it not now be justly said with St. *Paul, Who hath bewitched you*, ye *foolish Preachers*, to come forth with Zeal and Vehemence against Qualifications, Preparations, and Requisites to fit us for the Grace and Favour of Christ?——Did the heavenly Father send the *King and the best*

Robe to his wicked Son, whilſt he was content with his Harlots, his Huſks, and his Swine? Was his Eye of Goodneſs turned towards him, till he ſaw him upon the Road, a ſorrowful Seeker of his Father, with penitential Works, and full Change of Life?

Now if Chriſt in his Parable hath ſet forth a Sinner come to his right Senſes, how can you more ſhew, that you have loſt your's, than by cautioning Sinners againſt Qualifications, penitential Requiſites and Preparations to be received by Chriſt?——What is the whole Goſpel, but one continual Doctrine of all that is to be done, denied, renounced, and ſuffered, in order to have any Intereſt in God's free Gift of Chriſt, as a Saviour of the World?——Hear what the Saviour, who came to ſave all Men, ſaith to thoſe who forgot, that Repentance and good Works were the Qualifications and Requiſites to have any ſhare of Salvation, *I know ye not, depart from me all ye Workers of Iniquity.*——Is this a Saviour, that calls for no Salvation-Works, but will himſelf be *our whole Saviour, or none at all?*

Had Chriſt begun his Goſpel, with ſaying, I am come to ſave you all, without putting you to any Pains or Labour to be ſaved; I bring no terms with me, nor have any Demands upon you; I look for no Requiſites,

no Preparatory, no Repentance, and self-denying Works; I and all my Riches are freely your's; inward inborn Goodneſs cannot belong to you, but ye ſhall be the Children of God, not becauſe *ye are led by the Spirit of God*, but becauſe my Righteouſneſs ſhall be outwardly imputed to you; had this been the Goſpel of Chriſt, your Preachers of no Requiſites, no Qualifications to have Intereſt in Chriſt, might well be received as faithful Apoſtles.

You all complain that Chriſtianity is become a mere *outward Profeſſion*, without the inward Spirit of the Goſpel. This juſt and true Complaint, how vain is it in your Mouths? For how can your Chriſtianity in its beſt State, be any Thing elſe but bare outward Profeſſion, if Chriſtians neither have, nor can have any Righteouſneſs, but that which is outwardly imputed to them? Can you complain, or accuſe them of not being inwardly of the Spirit and Life of the Goſpel, if Goſpel-Goodneſs cannot be a Birth within them, but only the Goodneſs of another, that is to be accounted as theirs? Either therefore, give up your outwardly imputed Righteouſneſs, or complain no more that Chriſtians are mere *Formaliſts*; for both you and all your Preachers, however awakened, can only be *Formaliſts* yourſelves, and

can

can awaken nothing but Formality in others, unleſs the righteous Spirit of Chriſt hath its Fullneſs of a Birth in the inmoſt Spirit, both of Preachers and Hearers.

St. *Paul* ſaith, *Circumciſion is not that which is outward, but of the Heart.* Is it not full as neceſſary to ſay of Righteouſneſs, that it cannot be an outwardly imputed Thing, but muſt be the Righteouſneſs of the Heart? Had *Paul* told them, that the Circumciſion of the Heart could only be outwardly imputed to the Circumciſers of the Fleſh, he had preached the Law, as you do the Goſpel. Again, *He is not a* Jew, ſaith he, *that is one outwardly.* How unlike is this to your Doctrine, which will not allow the Chriſtian to be *one inwardly*, but ſolely by that which is outwardly imputed to him?— Again, *the Spirit*, ſaith he, beareth *Witneſs with our Spirit, that we are the Children of God.* But how could this be, but becauſe the Spirit that is within us is a Birth of that holy Spirit, whoſe Witneſs agreeth with it? For ſuppoſe no Birth of the Spirit within us, and then we have only that *natural* old Man, that *knoweth not the Things of the Spirit, becauſe they are Fooliſhneſs to him.*

Methodiſt. Let me, before we part, only aſk you theſe two Queſtions. Would you be

be glad to ſee Chriſtianity continued in its preſent, poor, blind, and apoſtate State from the Truth and Life of the Goſpel? Or can you ſhew me how it can return to its firſt Purity and Perfection of Godlineſs, unleſs Preachers go forth in ſuch a Spirit of Zeal, calling the World to Chriſt, as ours do?

Churchman. Take this for full Anſwer to every Queſtion of this Kind.

There are but two Spirits that govern every rational and intelligent Life.——The one is the Spirit of God, the other is the Spirit that is fallen from God, and works contrary to him ——Nothing is good in any Creature, but becauſe the good Spirit of God is the Doer of it; nothing is Evil, but that which is done by the Spirit of the Creature fallen off from God, and working in Self-will ——Here you have the infallible Touch-Stone for the Trial of all Spirits, which never can deceive you ——Every Spirit that calls you to be delivered from any Thing, but the Evil that is in your own Spirit, or that turns you to any Thing, as a Deliverance from it, but to the Spirit and Power of God within you, is not of God, but is an Agent under that Spirit that is fallen off from God.

The Chriſtian Religion has no Ground or Foundation, but becauſe the Spirit of Man

Man has loſt its firſt State of Union with God, and is unable of itſelf to recover it. —Hence it is, that Chriſt, God and Man united, is the one only poſſible Reſtorer of Man's firſt Union with God.—Therefore the whole of our Redemption conſiſts in our being made one with Chriſt, eſſentially born of him, that having his whole redeeming Nature come to Life in us, we may be in him, as he is in God, one Spirit, one Life to all Eternity.——*God was in Chriſt, Jeſus* ſaith *Paul, reconciling the World to himſelf.* But Chriſt was the Reconciler between God and Man, only and ſolely by that which he was, did, ſuffered, and obtained by and through his whole Proceſs, This is his Mediation-Work.——Are you in this Proceſs, you are in the Arms of your Mediator; his Meditation-Work is like a new Creation within you, and what God ſaw in his beloved Son, that he ſees in you; and you muſt belong to God, as he does, becauſe his Nature, Life, and Spirit, are in you. ——Therefore, is any one reconciled to God, it is becauſe Chriſt, is born in him; but the Seed of Chriſt, which is in every Son of *Adam*, never comes to the Fullneſs of the Birth of the new Creature, but through the Proceſs of Chriſt.——This is the one ſtraight Gate, and narrow Way, out of which there is nothing but Sin, Death, and

and Hell to every Man.——Without Chriſt we are without God; but who is without Chriſt is told you in the following Words, *Unleſs a Man deny himſelf, take his up Croſs*, &c. and *follow me, he cannot be my Diſciple.* This is the one Term of Union with Chriſt.

Suppoſe now a Preacher comes to you from *Rome*, with his invented Doctrines about Saints, Images, Sacraments, and Tranſubſtantiation, *&c.* threatening certain Damnation to all that do not receive them; ſuppoſe another coming from *Geneva*, as full of Damnation for all thoſe who will not receive his invented Doctrines of *ſaving* Faith without Works;—of the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt, not inwardly born, but only outwardly imputed to you;—of a Salvation and Damnation, equally the one ſole Work or Gift of God, neither of which you can any more help or hinder, than you can help or hinder the Duration of the World, or add one *Cubit to your own Stature*;——What Goſpel-Eyes muſt he have, who did not ſee as many Marks of the *Beaſt*, the *Whore*, and the *falſe Prophet* in one of theſe Preachers, as in the other? Or can you think, if St. *Paul* was again in the World, he would give a heartier God-ſpeed to the one than to the other?—Had the Apoſtle been a Preacher of your *Imputation-Doctrine*, he would never have

ſaid, *What Fellowſhip hath Righteouſneſs with Unrighteouſneſs?* as knowing that this was the very Fellowſhip which Chriſt had with the Sons of fallen *Adam*; his Righteouſneſs being only outwardly imputed to their *Unrighteouſneſs*. And how could he have cried out, as of an impoſſible Thing, *What Communion hath Light with Darkneſs, or what Concord hath Chriſt with Belial?* For had your Imputation-Doctrine been his, he would have known, that if Light was but outwardly imputed to Darkneſs, then the Darkneſs would be in Communion with Light; and if Chriſt's Righteouſneſs was but outwardly imputed to the Sons of Belial, then there would be Concord between Chriſt and Belial.—This is the blaſphemous Abſurdity of your Imputation-Doctrine; for unleſs the whole fallen Nature of Man be born again from above, the Righteouſneſs of Chriſt outwardly imputed to it is but like the ſame imputed to the unchanged Sons of Belial.

Without me, ſaith Chriſt, *ye can do Nothing*, that is, all is in vain, without my Proceſs; for Chriſt is that which his Proceſs is.—St. *Paul* ſaith, *No one can call Jeſus Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt*,—In theſe two ſhort Texts, you have the whole Nature and Subſtance of Chriſtian Redemption, namely,

namely, that it all consists in the Process of Christ, and the coming of the Holy Ghost. Christ's Process in the Flesh is the one only Way of dying to all that fleshly Evil, that *Adam* brought to Life in us; Christ come in the Spirit is the one only quickening of that divine Life to which *Adam* died. Trust to any thing else, seek to any Thing else, but this Process of Christ, and this Power of the Holy Ghost, and then all your leaning upon the Gospel will be no better than leaning upon a broken Reed,—These two fundamental Truths plainly shew, why the first preaching of the Gospel began, and must ever go on, saying Nothing but what is implied in these Words, *Repent, for the Kingdom of God is at Hand*.——*Repent*, shews the Necessity of making Christ's Process the one Way to the Kingdom of God; for Repentance-Works are in his Process and no where else.—*For the Kingdom of God is at Hand*, shews that Christ's coming in the Spirit is the one Thing sought for by his Process; for the Kingdom of God come among Men is Nothing else but Christ come in the Power of the Spirit; and where this Power is not come in the Likeness of a Kingdom, whatever Plenty there may be of Preachers, the Kingdom of God is yet afar off

The *Law* ended with Chriſt come in the Fleſh; his Proceſs was the fulfilling of all its Types, Figures, and Sacrifices.

The coming of Chriſt in the Spirit is juſt the ſame one only *fulfilling* of all the Goſpel-Diſpenſation.—And as the Law would have been all in vain, without Chriſt's coming in the Fleſh; ſo would the Goſpel alſo, without Chriſt's coming in the Spirit. And the *Jew* with his Old Teſtament rejecting Chriſt come in the Fleſh is juſt as true to the Law, as the Chriſtian is to the Goſpel, who does not own Chriſt as come in the Spirit to be the one only fulfilling of all its Doctrines.—For as all the Types, Figures, and Sacrifices of the Law were in themſelves but empty Shadows without Chriſt being the Life of them, ſo all Things written in the Goſpel are but dead Letters, till Chriſt coming in the Spirit quickens a new Creature to be the Reader, the Rememberer, and Doer of them.—Therefore, where the Holy Spirit is not ſought after, truſted to, and reſted in, as the End, the Subſtance, and living Power of the whole Goſpel, it is no Marvel, that Chriſtians, high and low, learned or unlearned, Churchman or Diſſenter, ſhould have no more of Goſpel-Virtues, than the Jews have of patriarchal Holineſs; or that the ſame Luſts, Vices, and worldly Craft, which

which prosper among Apostate *Jews*, should break forth with as much Strength in a fallen Christendom.

See here then your Work, ye *awakened Preachers*, if God has sent you forth, you can have no other Errand but that on which Christ sent his Apostles.—Do you preach any Thing but the *Process of Christ*, as the Way to the Kingdom of God, or call Men to any Power of walking in it, but that of the Holy Spirit, you are Strangers to, or Deserters from the Truth, as it is in Jesus, for neither Christ, nor his Apostles, ever taught any Thing else but this.——The old Man must die, or the new Man can never be made alive in Christ. But Nothing brings Death upon the old Man, but that one *self-denying Process of Christ*; Nothing gives Life to the new Man, but the *one Spirit of Christ born in it*. This is the Gospel Language from the Beginning to the End.

With this Language in your Mouths, the whole Gospel is with you, you may cry aloud and spare not; be as zealous here as you will or can; go out into the Streets and Lanes, the Highways and Hedges; compel Hypocrites, Sensualists, Worldings, and hardened Sinners to tremble at their Ways, to dread every Thing that is contrary to

Chriſt's Salvation-Proceſs; preach certain Damnation to every ſinful Luſt of the Fleſh, and no poſſible Power to be delivered from it, but by Chriſt coming in the Spirit, to ſet up his own Kingdom of God within you; and then every one who has the leaſt Spark of Goodneſs living in his Soul, will call you the *Sent of God*, will wiſh Proſperity to all your Labours of Love; and no one will be againſt you, but he that is not with Chriſt.

But if you come forth with the new-fangled Ungoſpel Doctrines of a *Calvin*, a *Zinzendorf*, &c. be your Zeal as great as it will, it only unites you with the Brick and Mortar-Builders of that *Anti-chriſtian Babel*, which *the Prince of the Power of the Air* has ſet up, in full Oppoſition to that *Rock*, on which Chriſt has built his one, Catholic, univerſal Salvation-Church.

And now, my dear Friend, wiſhing you, from the Bottom of my Heart, all that Bleſſing, which Chriſt beſtowed upon his Apoſtles, when he ſaid, *My Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you*, I bid you Farewel.

FINIS.

AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

CLERGY.

[Price Two Shillings.]

A N

HUMBLE, EARNEST,

AND

Affectionate ADDRESS,

TO THE

CLERGY.

By WILLIAM LAW, M. A.

THE THIRD EDITION.

LONDON,

Printed for G. ROBINSON, N°. 25, in Pater-Noſter-Row.

MDCCLXXIV.

ADVERTISEMENT.

AS this ADDRESS makes its Appearance after the Deceaſe of the Author, it cannot be thought improper to inform the Reader, that the Whole was ſent to the Preſs by himſelf, except a few Pages, the laſt of which was Wrote by him not many Days before his Death.

AN

ADDRESS

TO THE

CLERGY.

THE Reaſon of my humbly and affectionately addreſſing this Diſcourſe to the Clergy, is not becauſe it treats of Things not of common concern to all Chriſtians, but chiefly to invite and induce them, as far as I can, to the ſerious Peruſal of it; and becauſe whatever is *eſſential* to Chriſtian Salvation, if either neglected, overlooked, or miſtaken by them, is of the ſaddeſt Conſequence both to themſelves and the Churches in which they miniſter:——I ſay *eſſential* to Salvation, for I would not turn my own Thoughts, or call the Attention of Chriſtians, to any Thing but the *one Thing* needful, the one Thing *eſſential* and only *available* to our Riſing out of our fallen State, and becoming, as we were at our Creation, an holy Offſpring of God, and real Partakers of the divine Nature.

If

If it be aſked, What is this one Thing? It is the SPIRIT OF GOD brought again to his FIRST POWER OF LIFE IN US. Nothing elſe is wanted by us, nothing elſe intended for us, by the Law, the Prophets, and the Goſpel. Nothing elſe is, or can be effectual, to the making ſinful man become again a godly Creature.

Every thing elſe, be it what it will, however glorious and divine in outward Appearance, every Thing that Angels, Men, *Churches*, or *Reformations*, can do for us, is dead and helpleſs, but ſo far as it is the *immediate Work* of the Spirit of God breathing and living in it.

All Scripture bears full witneſs to this Truth, and the End and Deſign of all that is written, is only to call us back from the Spirit of Satan, the Fleſh, and the World, to be again under full Dependence upon, and Obedience to the Spirit of God, who out of *free Love* and thirſt after our Souls, ſeeks to have his *firſt Power* of Life in us. When this is done, all is done that the Scripture can do for us.——Read what Chapter, or Doctrine of Scripture you will, be ever ſo delightedwith it, it will leave you as poor, as empty and unreformed as it found you, unleſs it be a Delight that proceeds from, and has turned you *wholly* and *ſolely* to the Spirit of God, and ſtrengthened your

your Union with and Dependence upon Him. For Love and Delight in matters of Scripture, whilſt it is only a delight that is *merely* human, however Specious and Saints like it may appear, is but the *Self-love* of fallen Adam, and can have no better a Nature, till it proceeds from the *Inſpiration* of God, quickening his *own Life* and Nature within us, which alone can have or give forth a *godly Love*. For if it be an immutable Truth, that *no man can call Jeſus, Lord, but by the holy Ghoſt*, it muſt be a Truth equally immutable, that no one can have any one *Chriſt-like* Temper or Power of Goodneſs, but ſo far, and in ſuch Degree, as he is *immediately* led and governed by the holy Spirit.

The Grounds and Reaſons of which are as follows.

All poſſible Goodneſs that either can be named, or is nameleſs, was in God from all Eternity, and muſt to all Eternity be *inſeparable* from him; it can be no where but where God is. As therefore before God created any thing, it was certainly true that there was but *one that was good*, ſo it is juſt the ſame Truth, after God has created innumerable Hoſts of bleſſed holy and heavenly Beings, that there is but *one that is good*, and that is God.

All

All that can be called Goodneſs, Holineſs, divine Tempers, heavenly Affections, *&c.* in the Creatures, are no more their own, or the Growth of their created Powers, than they were their own before they were created. But all that is called divine Goodneſs and Virtue in the Creature, is nothing elſe, but the *one* Goodneſs of God manifeſting a *Birth* and *Diſcovery* of itſelf in the Creature, according as its created Nature is fitted to receive it. This is the unalterable State between God and the Creature. Goodneſs for ever and ever can only belong to God, as *eſſential* to him, and *inſeperable* from him as his own Unity.

God could not make the Creature to be great and glorious *in itſelf*; this is as impoſſible, as for God to create Beings into a State of *Independence* on himſelf. The Heavens, ſaith David, *declare the Glory of God*; and no Creature, any more than the Heavens, can declare any other Glory but that of God. And as well might it be ſaid, *that the Firmament ſhews forth* its own *Handy-Work*, as that a holy divine or heavenly Creature ſhews forth its own natural Power.

But now, if all that is divine, great, glorious, and happy, in the Spirits, Tempers, Operations, and Enjoyments, of the Creature, is only ſo much of the Greatneſs, Glory, Majeſty,

Majeſty, and Bleſſedneſs of God dwelling in it, and giving forth various Births of his own Triune *Life*, *Light*, and *Love*, in and through the manifold Forms and Capacities of the Creature to receive them, when we may infallibly ſee the true Ground and Nature of all true Religion, and *when* and *how* we may be ſaid to fulfil all our Religious Duty to God. For the Creatures true Religion is its rendering to God all that is God's, it is its true continual Acknowledging all that which it is, and has, and enjoys, in and from God. This is the one true Religion of all intelligent Creatures, whether in Heaven, or on Earth; for as they all have but one and the *ſame Relation* to God, ſo though ever ſo different in their ſeveral Births, States or Offices, they all have but one and the ſame true Religion, or right Behaviour towards God. Now the *one Relation*, which is the Ground of all true Religion, and is one of the ſame between God and all intelligent Creatures, is this, it is a *total unalterable Dependence upon God*, an *immediate continual receiving of every Kind and Degree of Goodneſs, Bleſſing, and Happineſs, that ever was, or can be found in them, from God alone.* The higheſt Angel has nothing of its *own* that it can offer unto God, no more Light, Love, Purity, Perfection, and glorious Hallelujahs, that

ſpring

pring from itſelf, or its own Powers, than he pooreſt Creature upon Earth. Could the Angel ſee a *Spark* of Wiſdom, Goodneſs, or Excellence, as coming from, or belonging to *its ſelf*, its Place in Heaven would be loſt, as ſure as *Lucifer* loſt his. But they are ever abiding Flames of Pure Love, always aſcending up to and uniting with God, for this Reaſon, becauſe the Wiſdom, the Power, the Glory, the Majeſty, the Love, and Goodneſs of God *alone* are all that they ſee, and feel, and know, either within or without themſelves.——Songs of Praiſe to their heavenly Father are their raviſhing Delight, becauſe they ſee, and know, and feel, that it is the *Breath* and *Spirit* of their Heavenly Father that *ſings* and *rejoyces* in Them.—Their Adoration in Spirit and in Truth never ceaſes, becauſe they never ceaſe to acknowledge the ALL of God;—— the ALL of God in themſelves, and the ALL of God in the whole Creation. This is the one Religion of Heaven, and nothing elſe is the Truth of Religion on Earth.

The Matter therefore plainly comes to this, Nothing can do, or be, the *Good of Religion* to the intelligent Creature, but the Power and Preſence of God *really* and *eſſentially* living and working in it. But if this be the unchangeable Nature of that *Goodneſs* and *Bleſſedneſs* which is to be had from

from our Religion, then of all Neceſſity, the Creature muſt have all its *Religious* Goodneſs as wholely and ſolely from God's *immediate Operation*, as it had its firſt Goodneſs at its Creation. And it is the ſame Impoſſibility for the Creature to help itſelf to That which is good and bleſſed in Religion by any Contrivance, Reaſonings, or Workings of its own Natural Powers, as to create itſelf. For the Creature, after its Creation, can no more take any Thing to itſelf that belongs to God, than it could take it before it was created. And if Truth forces us to hold, that the Natural Powers of the Creature could only come from the *one Power* of God, the ſame Truth ſhould ſurely more force us to confeſs, that *That* which *comforts*, that which *enlightens*, that which *bleſſes*, which gives Peace, Joy, Goodneſs, and Reſt to its natural Powers, can be had in no other way, nor by any other Thing, but from God's immediate holy Operation found in it.

Now the Reaſon why no Work of Religion, but that which is begun, continued, and carried on by the *Living Operation* of God in the creature, can have any Truth, Goodneſs, or divine Bleſſing in it, is becauſe nothing can in Truth *ſeek* God, but that which comes from God. Nothing can in Truth *find* God as its Good, but that which has

has the Nature of God living in it; like can only rejoyce in like; and therefore no religious Service in the Creature can have any Truth, Goodneſs, or Bleſſing in it, but that which is done in the Creature, in and through and by a Principle and Power of the divine Nature, begotten and breathing forth in it all holy Tempers, Affections, and Adorations.

All true Religion is, or brings forth, an eſſential Union and Communion of the Spirit of the Creature with the Spirit of the Creator: God in it, and it in God, one Life, one Light, one Love. The Spirit of God firſt gives, or ſows the *Seed* of divine Union in the Soul of every Man; and Religion is *That* by which it is quickened, raiſed, and brought forth to a Fullneſs and Growth of a Life in God.——Take a Similitude of this, as follows.——The Beginning, or *Seed* of animal *Breath*, muſt firſt be born in the Creature from the *Spirit* of this World, and then *Reſpiration*, ſo long as it laſts, keeps up an *eſſential Union* of the animal Life with the Breath or Spirit of this World. In like manner, divine Faith, Hope, Love, and Reſignation to God, are in the religious Life its acts of *Reſpiration*, which, ſo long as they are true, unite God and the Creature in the ſame living and eſſential manner, as *animal Reſpiration* unites the Breath of

f the Animal with the Breath of this World.

Now as no Animal could *begin* to reſpire, or unite with the Breath of this World, but becauſe it has its Beginning to breathe begotten in it from the Air of this World, ſo it is equally certain, that no Creature, Angel or Man, could *begin* to be religious, or breathe forth the divine Affections of Faith, Love, and Deſire towards God, but becauſe a *Living Seed* of theſe divine Affections was by the Spirit of God firſt *begotten* in it.——And as a *Tree* or *Plant* can only grow and fructify by the *ſame Power* that firſt gave Birth to the Seed, ſo Faith, and Hope, and Love towards God, can only grow and fructify by the *ſame Power* that begot the *firſt Seed* of them in the Soul. Therefore divine *immediate Inſpiration* and divine Religion are inſeparable in the Nature of the Thing.

Take away *Inſpiration*, or ſuppoſe it to ceaſe, and then no Religious acts or Affections can give forth any Thing that is godly or divine. For the Creature can offer, or return Nothing to God, but *That* which it has firſt received from him; therefore, if it is to offer and ſend up to God Affections and Aſpirations that are divine and godly, it muſt of all neceſſity have the divine and godly Nature living and breathing

ing in it.——Can any Thing reflect Light, before it has received it, or any other Light, than that which it has received? Can any Creature breathe forth *earthly*, or *diabolical* Affections, before it is poſſeſſed of an *earthly*, or *diabolical* Nature? Yet this is as poſſible, as for any Creature to have divine Affections riſing up and dwelling in it, either *before* or any *further*, than as it has or partakes of the divine Nature dwelling and operating in it.

A religious *Faith that* is *uninſpired*, a *Hope* or *Love*, that proceeds not from the immediate Working of the *divine Nature* within us, can no more do any divine Good to our Souls, or unite them with the Goodneſs of God, than an Hunger after earthly Food can feed us with the immortal Bread of Heaven.——All that the *natural* or *uninſpired* Man does, or can do in the Church, has no more of the Truth or Power of divine Worſhip in it, than that which he does in the *Field*, or *Shop*, through a Deſire of Riches.——And the reaſon is, becauſe all the Acts of the Natural Man, whether relating to Matters of Religion or the World, muſt be *equally Selfiſh*; and there is no Poſſibility of their being otherwiſe. For Self-love, Self-eſteem, Self-ſeeking, and Living *wholly* to Self, are as ſtrictly the *Whole* of all that is, or poſſibly can be in the *Natural*

tural Man, as in the Natural *Beaſt*; the one can no more be better, or act above *this Nature*, than the other. Neither can any Creature be in a better, or higher State than this, till ſomething *Supernatural* is found in it; and this Supernatural ſomething, called in Scripture the WORD, or SPIRIT, or INSPIRATION of God, is *that alone* from which Man can have the firſt Good Thought about God, or the leaſt Power of having more heavenly Deſires in his Spirit, than he has in his Fleſh.

A Religion that is not wholly built upon this *Supernatural Ground*, but ſolely ſtands upon the Powers, Reaſonings, and Concluſions of the Natural *uninſpired* Man, has not ſo much as the Shadow of true Religion in it, but is a mere *Nothing*, in the ſame Senſe as an *Idol* is ſaid to be *Nothing*, becauſe the *Idol* has nothing of That in it which is pretended by it. For the Work of Religion has no *divine good* in it, but as it brings forth, and keeps up eſſential Union of the Spirit of Man with the Spirit of God; which eſſential Union cannot be made but through Love on both Sides, nor by Love, but where the Love that works on both Sides is of the *ſame Nature*.

No Man therefore can reach God with his Love, or have Union with him by it, but he who is inſpired with that *one ſame*

Spirit of Love, with which God loved himſelf from all Eternity, and before there was any Creature.——Infinite Hoſts of new created Heavenly Beings can begin no *new Kind* of Love of God, nor have the leaſt Power of beginning to Love him at all, but ſo far as his *own holy Spirit of Love*, wherewith he hath from all Eternity loved himſelf, is brought to Life in them. This Love, that was then in God alone, can be the *only Love* in Creatures that can draw them to God; they can have no Power of cleaving to him, of willing that which He wills, or adoring the divine Nature, but by partaking of that *eternal Spirit* of Love; and therefore the continual immediate Inſpiration, or Operation of the holy Spirit, is the one only poſſible Ground of our continually Loving God. And of this *inſpired Love*, and no other, it is that St *John* ſays, *He that dwelleth in Love, dwelleth in God.* Suppoſe it to be any other Love, brought forth by any other Thing but the Spirit of God breathing his own Love in us, and then it cannot be true, that he who dwells in *ſuch Love* dwells in God.

Divine Inſpiration was *eſſential* to man's firſt created State. The Spirit of the Triune God, breathed into, or brought to Life in him, was that alone which made him a holy Creature in the Image and Likeneſs of

of God. To have no other Mover, to live under no other Guide or Leader but the Spirit, was that which conſtituted all the Holineſs which the firſt man could have from God. Had he not been thus at the firſt, God in him and he in God, brought into the World as a true offſpring and real Birth of the holy Spirit, no Diſpenſation of God to *fallen* man would have directed him to the holy Spirit, or ever have made mention of his Inſpiration in Man. For fallen Man could be directed to Nothing as his Good, but that which he had, and was his Good, before he fell. And had not the holy Spirit been his firſt Life, in and by which he lived, no *inſpired Prophets* among the Sons of fallen Adam had ever been heard of, or any *holy men ſpeaking as they were moved by the holy Ghoſt*. For the Thing would have been impoſſible; no fallen Man could have been *inſpired* by the holy Spirit, but becauſe the firſt Life of Man was a true and real Birth of it, and alſo becauſe every fallen Man had, by the Mercy and free Grace of God, a *ſecret Remains* of his firſt Life preſerved in him, though hidden, or rather ſwallowed up by Fleſh and Blood; which *Secret Remains*, ſignified and aſſured to Adam by the name of a *Bruiſer of the Serpent*, or *Seed of the woman*, was his *only capacity* to be called and quickened again

into his firſt Life by new Breathings of the holy Spirit in Him.

Hence it plainly appears, that the Goſpel State could not be God's *laſt Diſpenſation*, or the finiſhing of Man's Redemption, unleſs its whole Work was a Work of the Spirit of God in the Spirit of Man; that is, unleſs without all Vails, Types, and Shadows, it brought *the Thing itſelf*, or the *Subſtance* of all former Types and Shadows, into *real Enjoyment*, ſo as to be poſſeſſed by Man in *Spirit* and in *truth*. Now the *Thing itſelf*, for the Sake of which all God's Diſpenſations have been, is that *firſt Life of God which was eſſentially born in the Soul of the firſt Man*, Adam, and to which he died. But now, if the Goſpel Diſpenſation comes, at the End of all Types and Shadows, to bring forth again in Man a true and full Birth of that holy Spirit which he had at firſt, then it muſt be plain, that the Work of this Diſpenſation muſt be *ſolely* and *immediately* the Work of the holy Spirit. For if Man could no other poſſible way have had a holy Nature and Spirit *at firſt*, but as an Offspring or Birth of the holy Spirit at his Creation, it is certain from the Nature of the Thing, that fallen Man, dead to his firſt holy Nature, can have that ſame holy Nature again no other way, but ſolely by the Operation of that ſame holy Spirit, from the

the Breath of which he had at firſt a holy Nature and Life in God. Therefore *immediate* Inſpiration is as neceſſary to make fallen Man alive again unto God, as it was to make Man at firſt a Living Soul after the Image and in the Likeneſs of God. And *Continual* Inſpiration is as neceſſary as Man's Continuance in his redeemed State. For this is a certain Truth, that *That* alone which begins, or gives Life, muſt of all Neceſſity be the only Continuance or Preſervation of Life. The ſecond Step can only be taken by *That* which gave Power to take the firſt.——No Life can continue in the Goodneſs of its firſt created, or redeemed State, but by its continuing under the Influence of, and working with and by that Powerful Root, or Spirit, which at firſt created, or redeemed it. Every Branch of the Tree, though ever ſo richly brought forth, muſt wither and dye, as ſoon as it ceaſes to have *continual Union* with, and Virtue from that Root, which firſt brought it forth. And to this Truth, as abſolutely grounded in the Nature of the Thing, our Lord appeals as a Proof and full Illuſtration of the Neceſſity of his *immediate* indwelling, Breathing, and Operating in the redeemed Soul of Man, ſaying, *I am the Vine*, ye *are the Branches*, as the Branch *cannot bear fruit of itſelf*, no *more can ye, except ye abide in me. He that abideth in me,*

and I *in him, the ſame bringeth forth much Fruit. If a man abides not in me, he is caſt forth as a withered* Branch; for *without me, ye can do Nothing.* John xv.

Now from theſe Words let this concluſion be here drawn, *viz.* That, therefore to turn to Chriſt as a *Light within* us, to expect Life from nothing but his *holy Birth* raiſed within us, to give ourſelves up wholly and ſolely to the *immediate continual* Influx and Operation of his holy Spirit, depending wholly upon it for every Kind and Degree of Goodneſs and Holineſs that we want, or can receive, is and can be Nothing elſe but *proud rank* Enthuſiaſm.

Now as infinitely abſurd as this concluſion is, no one that condemns *continual immediate Inſpiration* as groſs Enthuſiaſm, can poſſibly do it with leſs abſurdity, or ſhew himſelf a Wiſer Man, or better Reaſoner, than he that concludes, that Becauſe *without Chriſt we can do Nothing*, therefore we ought not to believe, expect, wait for, and depend upon his continual immediate operation in every Thing that we do, or would do well.——As to the *Pride* charged upon this pretended Enthuſiaſm, it is the ſame abſurdity. Chriſt ſays, *without me ye can do Nothing*, the ſame as if he had ſaid, As to yourſelves, and all that can be called your own, your are mere *helpleſs Sin and Miſery*, and Nothing

thing that is good can come from you, but as it is done by the *continual immediate* Breathing and Inſpiration of another Spirit, given by God to over-rule *your own*, to ſave and deliver you from all your own Goodneſs, your own Wiſdom, and Learning, which always were, and always will be, as corrupt and impure, as earthly and ſenſual, as your own Fleſh and Blood. Now is there any *ſelfiſh* Creaturely Pride in fully believing this to be true, and in acting in full Conformity to it? If ſo, then he that confeſſes he neither has, nor ever can have a ſingle Farthing, but as it is freely given him from Charity, thereby declares himſelf to be a Purſe-proud vain Boaſter of his own Wealth. Such is the Spiritual Pride of Him, who fully acknowledges that he neither has, nor can have the leaſt Spark or breathing after Goodneſs, but what is freely kindled, or breathed into him by the Spirit of God. Again, if it is *Spiritual Pride* to believe, that Nothing that we ever think, or ſay, or do, either in the Church, or our Cloſets, can have any truth of goodneſs in it, but that which is wrought ſolely and immediately by the Spirit of God in us, then it muſt be ſaid, that in order to have *religious Humility* we muſt never forget to take ſome Share of our religious Virtues to ourſelves, and not allow (as Chriſt hath ſaid) that *without Him*

we can do Nothing that is good. It muſt alſo be ſaid, that St Paul took too much upon him, when he ſaid, *The Life that I now live, is not mine, but Chriſt's that liveth in me.*

Behold a Pride and an Humility, the one as good as the other, and both logically deſcended from a Wiſdom, that confeſſes it comes not from above.

The Neceſſity of a Continual Inſpiration of the Spirit of God, both to begin the firſt, and continue every ſtep of a divine Life in Man, is a Truth to which every Life in Nature, as well as all Scripture, bears full Witneſs.——A *natural* Life, a *beaſtial* Life, a *diabolical* Life, can ſubſiſt no longer, than whilſt they are immediately and continually under the working Power of that Root, or Source, from which they Sprung. Thus it is with the *divine* Life in Man, it can never be in him, but as a Growth of Life in and from God.——Hence it is, that *Reſiſting* the Spirit, *Quenching* the Spirit, *Grieving* the Spirit, is that alone which gives Birth and Growth to every Evil that reigns in the World, and leaves Men, and Churches, not only an eaſy, but a *neceſſary* Prey to the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh. And Nothing but *Obedience* to the Spirit, *truſting* to the Spirit, *walking* in the Spirit, *praying* with and for its continual Inſpiration, can poſſibly keep

keep either Men, or Churches, from being Sinners, or Idolaters, in all that they do. For every thing in the Life, or Religion of Man, that has not the Spirit of God for its *Mover*, *Director*, and *End*, be it what it will, is but earthly, ſenſual, or deviliſh.——The Truth and Perfection of the Goſpel State could not ſhew itſelf, till it became ſolely a *Miniſtration of the Spirit*, or a Kingdom in which the holy Spirit of God had the doing of all that was done in it.——The Apoſtles, whilſt Chriſt was with them in the Fleſh, were inſtructed in heavenly Truths from his Mouth, and enabled to work Miracles in his Name, yet not qualified to know and teach the *Myſteries* of his Kingdom. After his Reſurrection, He converſed with them forty Days, ſpeaking to them of Things pertaining to the Kingdom of God; nay though he breathed on them, and ſaid, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt*, &c. yet this alſo would not do, they were ſtill unable to preach, or bear Witneſs to the *Truth*, *as it is in Jeſus*. And the Reaſon is, there was ſtill a *higher Diſpenſation* to come, which ſtood in ſuch an *opening* of the divine Life in their Hearts, as could not be effected from an outward Inſtruction of Chriſt himſelf. For though He had ſufficiently told his Diſciples the *Neceſſity* of being born again of the Spirit, yet he left them *unborn* of it, till He came again in the Power of the

the Spirit. He breathed on them, and ſaid, *Receive ye the Holy Ghoſt*, yet that which was *ſaid* and *done*, was not the *Thing itſelf*, but only a *Type* or *outward Signification* of what they ſhould receive, when He, being *glorified*, ſhould come again in the Fulneſs and Power of the Spirit, breaking open the Deadneſs and Darkneſs of their Hearts with Light and Life from Heaven, which Light did, and alone could, open and verify in their Souls all that he had ſaid and promiſed to them whilſt he was with them in the Fleſh.——All this is expreſsly declared by Chriſt himſelf, ſaying unto them, *I tell you the Truth, it is expedient for you that I go away*; therefore Chriſt taught them to believe the *Want*, and joyfully to expect the *Coming* of a *higher* and more *bleſſed* State, than that of his bodily Preſence with them. For he adds, if *I go not away, the Comforter will not come*; therefore the Comfort and Bleſſing of Chriſt to his Followers could not be had, till *ſomething more* was done to them, and they were brought into a *higher State* than they could be by his verbal Inſtruction of them. *But if I go away*, ſays he, *I will ſend him unto you*; and *when the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth is come, he will guide you into all Truth*; *He ſhall glorify me* (that is, ſhall ſet up my Kingdom in its Glory, in the Power of the Spirit) for *he ſhall receive of mine*,

mine, and ſhall ſhew it unto you: I ſaid of mine, becauſe all Things that the Father hath are mine, John xvi.

Now when Chriſt had told them of the Neceſſity of a higher State than that they were in, and the Neceſſity of ſuch a comforting illuminating Guide, as they could not have till his *outward Teaching* in human Language was changed into the *Inſpiration*, and *Operation* of his Spirit in their Souls, He commands them, not to begin to bear Witneſs of him to the World, from what they did and could in an *human Way* know of him, his Birth, his Life, Doctrines, Death, Sufferings, Reſurrection, *&c.* but to tarry at Jeruſalem, *till they were endued with Power from on high*; ſaying unto them, *Ye ſhall receive Power, after that the Holy Ghoſt is come upon you. And then ſhall ye bear witneſs unto me, both* in *Jeruſalem*, and in *all Judea*, and *unto the utmoſt Part of the Earth.*

Here are two moſt important and fundamental Truths fully demonſtrated, *Firſt*, That the Truth and Perfection of the Goſpel State could not take Place till Chriſt *was glorified*, and his Kingdom among Men made wholly and ſolely a *continual immediate Miniſtration of the Spirit:* Every Thing *before* this was but ſubſervient for a Time, and preparatory to *this laſt* Diſpenſation, which could not have been the *laſt*, had it not

not carried Man above *Types*, *Figures*, and Shadows, into the *real Poſſeſſion* and *Enjoyment* of that which is the Spirit and Truth of a divine Life. For the *End* is not come till it has found the *Beginning*; that is, the *laſt* Diſpenſation of God to fallen Man cannot be *come*, till putting an End to the *Bondage of weak and beggarly Elements*, Gal. iv. 9. it brings Man to *that* dwelling in God, and God in Him, which He had at the *Beginning*.

Secondly, That as the *Apoſtles* could not, ſo no man, from their Time to the End of the World, can have any *true* and *real* Knowledge of the Spiritual Bleſſings of Chriſt's Redemption, or have a *divine call*, *Capacity*, or *Fitneſs* to preach, and bear Witneſs of them to the World, but ſolely by that *Same divine* Spirit opening all the Myſteries of a *Redeeming Chriſt* in their inward Parts, as it did in the Apoſtles, Evangeliſts, and firſt Miniſters of the Goſpel.

For why could not the Apoſtles, who had been Eye-Witneſſes to all the whole Proceſs of Chriſt, why could they not with their human Apprehenſion declare and teſtify the Truth of ſuch Things, till they *were baptized with Fire, and born again* of *the Spirit?* It is becauſe the Truth of Such Things, or the Myſteries of Chriſt's Proceſs, as *Knowable* by man, are Nothing elſe in themſelves but

thoſe

thoſe very Things which are done by this heavenly *Fire* and *Spirit* of God in our Souls. Therefore to know the Myſteries of Chriſt's Redemption, and to know the *Redeeming Work* of God in our own Souls, is the Same Thing; the one cannot be *before*, or *without* the other. Therefore Every Man, be he who he will, however able in all Kinds of human literature, muſt be an entire Stranger to all the Myſteries of Goſpel Redemption, and can only talk about them as of any other *Tale he has been told*, till they are brought forth, verified, fulfilled, and witneſſed to *by That* which is found felt and enjoyed of the *whole Proceſs* of Chriſt in his Soul. For as Redemption is in its whole Nature an *inward Spiritual* Work, that works only in the *altering*, *changing*, and *regenerating* the Life of the Soul, ſo it muſt be true, that Nothing but the *inward State* of the Soul can bear true Witneſs to the Redeeming Power of Chriſt. For as it wholly conſiſts in altering *That* which is the moſt radical in the Soul, bringing forth a *new* Spiritual Death, and a *new* Spiritual Life, it muſt be true that no one can know or believe the Myſteries of Chriſt's redeeming Power, by *hiſtorically knowing*, or *rationally* conſenting to That which is ſaid of him and them in *Written* or *Spoken* Words, but only and Solely by an inward experimental finding and feeling the Operation

Operation of them in that *new* Death, and *new* Life, both of which muſt be effected in the Soul of Man, or Chriſt is not, cannot be found, and Known by the Soul as its Salvation. It muſt alſo be equally true, that the redeemed State of the Soul, being in itſelf Nothing elſe but the Reſurrection of a divine and holy Life in it, muſt as neceſſarily from firſt to laſt be the *Sole Work* of the Breathing creating Spirit of God, as the firſt holy created State of the Soul was.——And all this, becauſe the Myſteries of Chriſt's redeeming Power, which work and bring forth the renewed State of the Soul, are not creaturely, finite, outward Things, that may be found and enjoyed by verbal Deſcriptions, or formed Ideas of them, but are a *Birth*, and *Life*; and *Spiritual Operation*, which as ſolely belongs to God alone as his creating Power. For Nothing can redeem, but that ſame Power which created the Soul. Nothing can bring forth a *good* Thought in it, but that which brought forth the *Power* of thinking. And of every *Tendency* towards Goodneſs, be it ever ſo ſmall, that ſame may be truly affirmed of it, which St Paul affirmed of his higheſt State, *yet not I, but Chriſt that liveth in me.*

But if the Belief of the neceſſity and Certainty of immediate continual divine Inſpiration, in and for every thing that can be holy

and good in us, be (as its Accuſers ſay) *rank Enthuſiaſm*, then He is the only ſober orthodox Chriſtian, who of many a good Thought and Action that proceeds from him, frankly ſays, in order to avoid Enthuſiaſm, *My own Power*, and not Chriſt's Spirit living and breathing in me, *has done* this for me. For if *all* that is good is not done by Chriſt then *Something* that is good is done by myſelf. It is in vain to think that there is a *middle Way*, and that *rational Divines* have found it out, as Dr. *Warburton* has done, who though denying *immediate continual* Inſpiration, yet allows that the Spirit's "ordi-"nary Influence occaſionally aſſiſts the faithful." *

Now this *middle Way* has neither Scripture nor ſenſe in it; for an *occaſional* Influence or Concurrence is as abſurd, as an *occaſional* God, and neceſſarily Suppoſes ſuch a God. For an occaſional *influence* of the ſpirit upon us ſuppoſes an occaſional *Abſence* of the Spirit from us. For there could be no ſuch Thing, unleſs God was ſometimes with us, and ſometimes not, ſometimes doing us good, as the inward God of our Life, and ſometimes doing us no good at all, but leaving us to be good from our ſelves.——Occaſional Influence neceſſarily implies all this blaſphemous Abſurdity. Again, this *middle way* of an *occaſional Influence* and *Aſſiſtance* neceſſarily ſuppoſes

* Serm. Vol. I.

ſuppoſes that there is ſomething of *man's own* that is good, or the holy ſpirit of God neither would, nor could aſſiſt or co-operate with it. But if there was any Thing good in Man for God to aſſiſt and co-operate with, beſides the *SEED* of his own divine Nature, or his own WORD of Life Striving to bruiſe the Serpent's Nature within us, it could not be true, that there is only *one that is good, and that is God.* And was there any Goodneſs in Creatures, either in Heaven, or on Earth, but the *one Goodneſs* of the divine nature, living, working, and manifeſting itſelf in them, as its created Inſtruments, then good Creatures, both in Heaven and on Earth, would have ſomething elſe to adore *beſides*, or along with God. For Goodneſs, be it where it will, is adorable for itſelf, and becauſe it is Goodneſs; if therefore any Degree of it belonged to the Creature, it ought to have a ſhare of that ſame Adoration that is paid to the Creator.——Therefore, if to believe that Nothing godly can be alive in us, but what has *all its* Life from the Spirit of God living and breathing in us, if to look *Solely* to it, and depend *wholly* upon it, both for the *Beginning*, and *Growth* of every Thought and Deſire that can be holy and good in us, be *proud rank Enthuſiaſm*, then it muſt be the ſame Enthuſiaſm to own but *one* God. For He that owns more goodneſs than one, owns

more

more Gods than one. And He that believes he can have any good in him, but the *one* Goodneſs of God, manifeſting itſelf in him, and through him, owns more goodneſs than one. But if it be true, that God and Goodneſs cannot be divided, then it muſt be a Truth for ever and ever, that ſo much of *Good*, ſo much of *God* muſt be in the Creature.

And here lies the true unchangeable Diſtinction between God, and *Nature*, and the *Natural Creature*. Nature and Creature are only for the *outward Manifeſtation* of the inward inviſible unapproachable Powers of God; they can riſe no higher, nor be any thing elſe in themſelves, but as Temples, habitations, or Inſtruments, in which the *Supernatural* God can, and does manifeſt himſelf in various Degrees, bringing forth Creatures to be good with *his own Goodneſs*, to love and adore him with his *own* Spirit of Love, for ever ſinging Praiſes to the *divine* Nature by *That* which they *partake* of it. This is the Religion of *divine Inſpiration*, which being interpreted is *Immanuel*, or God *within us*. Every Thing ſhort of this is ſhort of that Religion which worſhips God in ſpirit and in Truth. And every religious Truſt or Confidence in any Thing, but the *divine operation within us*, is but a ſort of Image-Worſhip which though it may deny the

Form, yet retains the *Power* thereof in the Heart. And he that places any religious ſafety in theological Deciſions, Scholaſtic Points, in particular Doctrines and opinions, that muſt be held about the Scripture Words of *Faith*, *Juſtification*, *Sanctification*, *Election*, and *Reprobation*, ſo far departs from the true Worſhip of the Living God within him, and Sets up an *Idol* of Notions to be worſhipped, if not inſtead of, yet along with him. And I believe it may be taken for a certain Truth, that every Society of Chriſtians, whoſe Religion ſtands upon this Ground, however ardent, laborious, and good their zeal may ſeem to be in ſuch Matters, yet in ſpite of all, ſooner or later, it will be found that *Nature* is at the Bottom, and that a ſelfiſh, earthly, overbearing Pride in their own Definitions and Doctrines of Words, will by Degrees creep up to the ſame Height, and become that ſame fleſhly Wiſdom, doing thoſe very ſame Things, which they exclaim againſt in Popes, Cardinals, and Jeſuits. Nor can it poſſibly be otherwiſe. For a *letter-learned zeal* has but *one Nature* whereever it is, it can only do that for Chriſtians, which it did for Jews. As it antiently brought forth Scribes, Phariſees, Hypocrites, and Crucifiers of Chriſt, as it afterwards brought forth Hereſies, Schiſms, Popes, papal Decrees, Images, Anathema's, Tranſubſtantiation, ſo

in

in Proteſtant Countries it will be doing the ſame Thing, only with *other materials*; Images of wood and Clay, will only be given up for *Images of Doctrines*; Grace and Works, imputed ſin, and imputed Righteouſneſs, Election and Reprobation, will have their Synods of *Dort*, as truly evangelical as any Council of Trent.

This muſt be the Caſe of all fallen Chriſtendom, as well Popiſh as Proteſtant, till ſingle Men and Churches know, confeſs, and firmly adhere to this one Scripture Truth, which the bleſſed *Behmen* prefixed as a *Motto* to moſt of his Epiſtles, *viz. That our Salvation is in the Life of Jeſus Chriſt in us.* And that, becauſe this alone was the divine Perfection of Man before he fell, and will be his Perfection when he is one with Chriſt in Heaven.——Every thing beſides this, or that is not ſolely aiming at and eſſentially leading to it, is but mere Babel in all Sects and Diviſions of Chriſtians, living to themſelves, and their *own old man*, under a *ſeeming holineſs* of Chriſtian Strife and Contention about Scripture words.——But this Truth of Truths, fully poſſeſſed, and firmly adhered to, brings God and Man together, puts an End to every *Lo here*, and *Lo there*, and turns the whole Faith of Man to a Chriſt that can no where be a Saviour to him, but as *eſſentially born* in the inmoſt

Spirit of his Soul, nor poſſible to be born there by any other means, but the *immediate Inſpiration* and working Power of the holy Spirit within him.——To this Man alone all Scripture gives daily Edification; the Words of Chriſt and his Apoſtles fall like a Fire into him. And what is it that they kindle There? Not Notions, not Itching ears, nor rambling Deſires after new and new Expounders of them, but a holy Flame of Love, to be always with, always attending to, that Chriſt and his holy Spirit within him, which alone can make him to be and do all that, which the Words of Chriſt and his Apoſtles have taught. For there is no poſſibility of being *like-minded* with Chriſt in any thing that he taught, or having the Truth of one Chriſtian Virtue, but by the Nature and Spirit of Chriſt become *eſſentially living* in us. Read all our Saviour's divine Sermon from the Mount, conſent to the Goodneſs of every Part of it, yet the Time of practiſing it will never come, till you have a new Nature from Chriſt, and are as vitally in him, and he in you, as the *Vine* in the Branch, and the Branch in the Vine. *Bleſſed are the pure in Heart, for they ſhall ſee God,* is a divine Truth, but will do us no *divine* good, unleſs we receive it as ſaying neither more nor leſs, than *Bleſſed are they that are born again of the Spirit, for they alone*

alone can see God.—For no Blessedness, either of Truth or Life, can be found either in Men or Angels, but where the Spirit and Life of God are essentially born within them. And all *Men* or *Churches*, not placing all in the Life, Light, and Guidance of the holy Spirit of Christ, but pretending to act in the Name, and for the Glory of God, from *Opinions* which their Logic and Learning have collected from Scripture Words, or from what a *Calvin*, an *Arminius*, a *Socinus*, or some smaller Name has told them to be right or wrong, all such are but where the Apostles were, when *by the Way there was a Strife among them who should be the greatest.* And how much soever they may say, and boast of their great Zeal for Truth, and the only Glory of God, yet their own open notorious Behaviour towards one another is proof enough that the great Strife amongst them is, which shall be the *greatest Sect*, or have the largest Number of Followers. A Strife, from the same Root, and just as useful to Christianity, as that of the Carnal Apostles who should be greatest. For not numbers of Men, or Kingdoms professing Christianity, but numbers redeemed from the Death of Adam to the Life of Christ, are the Glory of the Christian Church. And in whatever *National* Christianity any Thing else is *meant*, or *sought* after by the

Profeſſion of the Goſpel, but a *new heavenly* Life, through the *mediatorial Nature* and Spirit of the eternal Son of God, born in the Fallen Soul, wherever this *Spirituality* of the Goſpel-Redemption is denied or overlooked, there the Spirit of *Self*, of *Satanic* and *worldly* Subtilty, will be Church, and Prieſt, and ſupreme Power, in all that is called Religion.

But to return now to the Doctrine of Continual Inſpiration. The *Natural* or unregenerate Man, educated in *pagan* Learning, and *Scholaſtic* Theology, ſeeing the Strength of his Genius in the Search after Knowledge, how eaſily and learnedly he can talk, and write, criticiſe and determine upon all Scripture Words and Facts, looks at all this as a full Proof of his own religious Wiſdom Power and Goodneſs, and calls *immediate Inſpiration* Enthuſiaſm, not conſidering, that *all the Woes* denounced by Chriſt againſt Scribes, Phariſees, and Hypocrites, are ſo many Woes now at this day denounced againſt every *Appearance* and *Shew* of Religion, that the *natural Man* can practiſe.

And what is well to be noted, every one, however high in human literature, is but this very *natural Man*, and can only have the Goodneſs of a *carnal ſecular* Religion, till as empty of all, as a new born Child, the Spirit of God gets a full Birth in him,

and

and becomes the *Inſpirer* and *Doer* of all that he wills, does, and aims at, in his whole Courſe of Religion.

Our divine Maſter compares the Religion of the learned Phariſees *to whited Sepulchres, outwardly beautiful,* but inwardly full of Rottenneſs, *ſtench,* and *dead Mens bones.*

Now whence was it, that a Religion, ſo ſerious in its Reſtraints, ſo beautiful in its outward Form and Practices, and commanding ſuch Reverence from all that beheld it, was yet charged by Truth itſelf with having *inwardly* ſuch an abominable Nature? It was only for this one Reaſon, becauſe it was a *Religion of Self.* —Therefore, from the Beginning to the End of the World, it muſt be true, that where *Self* is kept alive, has Power and keeps up its own Intereſts, whether in Speaking, Writing, teaching or defending the moſt *ſpecious Number* of Scripture Doctrines and religious Forms, *There* is that very old Phariſee *ſtill alive,* whom Chriſt with ſo much Severity of Language conſtantly condemned. And the Reaſon of ſuch heavy Condemnation is, becauſe *Self* is the only Root, or rather the *Sum total* of all Sin; every Sin that can be named is centered in it, and the Creature can Sin no higher than he can live to Self.——For Self is the Fullneſs of *Atheiſm* and *Idolatry,* it is nothing elſe but the Creature *broken off* from God and Chriſt;

it is the Power of Satan living and working in us, and the ſad Continuance of that firſt Turning from God, which was the *whole Fall* or Death of our firſt Father.

And yet, ſad and Satanical as *this Self* is, what is ſo much cheriſhed and nouriſhed with our daily Love, Fears, and Cares about it? How much worldly Wiſdom, how much laborious Learning, how many Subtilties of Contrivance, and how many flattering Applications, and Submiſſions are made to the World, that this *apoſtate Self* may have it's Fullneſs, both of inward Joys, and outward Glory?

But to all this it muſt yet be added, that a *Religion of Self*, of worldly Glory and Proſperity carried on under the Goſpel State, has more of a diabolical Nature than that of the Jewiſh Phariſees.—It is the *higheſt* and *laſt* Working of the Myſtery of Iniquity, becauſe it lives to Self, Satan, and the World, in and by a daily Profeſſion of *denying* and *dying* to Self, of being crucified with Chriſt, of being led by his Spirit, of being riſen from the World, and ſet with him in Heavenly places.

Let then the *Writers* againſt continual immediate divine Inſpiration take this for a certain Truth, that by ſo doing they do all they can to draw Man from *That* which is the *very Truth* and *Perfection* of the Goſpel

pel State, and are, and can be, no better than pitiable Advocates for a *Religion of Self*, more blameable and abominable *now*, than that which was of old condemned by Chriſt. For whatever is pretended to be done in Goſpel Religion by any other Spirit or Power, but that of the Holy Ghoſt bringing it forth, whether it be Praying, Preaching, or practiſing any Duties, is all of it but the *Religion of Self*, and can be nothing elſe. For all that is born of the Fleſh is Fleſh, and nothing is ſpiritual, but that which has its whole Birth from the Spirit. But Man, not ruled and governed by the Spirit, has only the Nature of *Corrupt Fleſh*, is under the full Power and Guidance of fallen Nature, and is that very *natural Man, to whom the Things of God are Fooliſhneſs*. But Man boldly *rejecting*, and *preaching* againſt a continual immediate divine Inſpiration, is an Anti-Apoſtle, he lays another Foundation than that which Chriſt has laid, he teaches that Chriſt needs not, muſt not, be *all* in *all* in *us*, and is a Preacher up of the Folly of Fearing to *grieve*, *quench*, and *reſiſt* the holy Spirit.——For *when*, or *where*, or *how* could every one of us be in Danger of grieving, quenching, or reſiſting the Spirit, unleſs his holy Breathings and Inſpirations were *always* within us? Or how could the *Sin* againſt the Holy Ghoſt have a more

dreadful

dreadful Nature, than that againſt the Father and the Son, but becauſe the *continual immediate* Guidance and Operation of the Spirit is the *laſt* and *higheſt* Manifeſtation of the holy Trinity in the fallen Soul of Man? It is not becauſe the holy Ghoſt is more worthy, or higher in Nature than the Father and the Son, but becauſe Father and Son come forth in their *own higheſt Power* of redeeming Love, through the Covenant of a continual immediate Inſpiration of the Spirit, to be always dwelling and working in the Soul. Many weak Things have been conjectured, and publiſhed to the World, about the *Sin* againſt the Holy Ghoſt; whereas the whole Nature of it lies in this, that it is a Sinning, or Standing out againſt the *laſt* and *higheſt* Diſpenſation of God for the full Redemption of Man. Chriſt ſays, *If I had not come, they had not had Sin*, that is, they had not had ſuch a weight of guilt upon them; therefore the Sinning againſt Chriſt *come into the Fleſh* was of a more *unpardonable* Nature, than Sinning againſt the Father under *the Law*. So likewiſe Sinning againſt the *Holy Ghoſt* is of a more unpardonable Nature than Sinning againſt the Father under the *Law*, or againſt the Son as *come in the Fleſh*, becauſe theſe two preceeding Diſpenſations were but preparatory to the *Coming*, or full Miniſtration of the Spirit. But when Father and Son were come in the *Power* and *Mani-*

Manifeſtation of the Spirit, then he that refuſes or reſiſts *this Miniſtration* of the Spirit, reſiſts *all* that the holy Trinity can do to reſtore and revive the firſt Life of God in the Soul, and ſo commits the *unpardonable* Sin, and which is therefore unpardonable, becauſe there remains no *further*, or *higher* Power to remove it out of the Soul. For no Sin is pardonable, becauſe of its *own Nature*, or that which it is in itſelf, but becauſe there is *ſomething* yet to come that can remove it out of the Soul; nor can any Sin be *unpardonable*, but becauſe it has withſtood, or turned from that which was the *laſt* and *higheſt* Remedy for the Removal of it.

Hence it is, that grieving, quenching, or reſiſting the Spirit, is the *Sin of all Sins*, that moſt of all ſtops the Work of Redemption, and in the higheſt Degree ſeparates Man from all Union with God. But there could be no ſuch Sin, but becauſe the holy Spirit is *always* Breathing, Willing, and Working within us. For what Spirit can be *grieved* by us, but that which has its *will* within us *diſobeyed?* What Spirit can be *quenched* by us, but that which is, and ever would be, a *holy Fire* of Life *within* us? What Spirit can be reſiſted by us, but that which is, and has its *Working* within us? A Spirit on the *outſide* of us cannot be the Spirit of God, nor could ſuch a Spirit be any more quenched, or hindered by our Spirit, than a Man by indig-

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nation at a Storm could ſtop its Rage. Now, dreadful as the abovementioned Sin is, I would aſk all the *Writers* againſt *continual immediate* divine Inſpiration, how they could more effectually lead Men into an *habitual* State of *Sinning* againſt the Holy Ghoſt, than by ſuch Doctrine? For how can we poſſibly *avoid* the Sin of grieving, quenching, *&c.* the Spirit, but by continually reverencing his holy Preſence in us, by continually waiting for, truſting, and ſolely attending to That which the Spirit of God *wills, works,* and *manifeſts* within us? To turn Men from this continual Dependance upon the holy Spirit, is turning them from all true Knowledge of God. For without this, there is no Poſſibility of any edifying ſaving Knowledge of God. For though we have ever ſo many mathematical Demonſtrations of his *Being,* &c. we are without all real Knowledge of Him, till his own quickening Spirit within us manifeſts Him, as a *Power* of Life, Light, Love, and Goodneſs, *eſſentially* found, vitally felt, and adored in our Souls. This is the one Knowledge of God, which *is eternal Life,* becauſe it is the Life of God manifeſted in the Soul, that Knowledge of which Chriſt ſays, No one *knoweth the Father but the Son,* and *He* to *whomſoever the Son revealeth him.* Therefore this Knowledge is only poſſible to be found in Him, who is in Chriſt *a new Creature,* for ſo it is that Chriſt revealeth the

the Father. But if none belong to God, but thoſe who are *led by the Spirit of God*, if we are Reprobates unleſs the Spirit of Chriſt be living in us, who need be told, that all that we have to truſt to or depend upon, as Children of God and Chriſt, is the *continual immediate Guidance*, *Unction*, and *Teaching of his holy Spirit within us?* Or how can we more *profanely* Sin againſt this Spirit and Power of God within us, or more expreſsly call Men from the Power of God to Satan, than by ridiculing a Faith and Hope that look *wholly* and *ſolely* to his continual immediate Breathings and Operations, for all that can be holy and good in us?

When I am lifted up from the Earth, ſays Chriſt, *I will draw all Men to me.* Therefore the *one great Power* of Chriſt in and over the Souls of Men is *after* he is in Heaven; then begins the true full Power of his Drawing, becauſe it is by his Spirit in Man that he draws. But who can more reſiſt *this Drawing*, or defeat its Operation in us, than he that preaches againſt, and condemns the Belief of a continual and immediate Inſpiration of the Spirit, when Chriſt's *Drawing* can be in nothing elſe, nor be powerful any other Way?

Now That which we are here taught is the whole End of all Scripture; for all that is there ſaid, however learnedly read, or ſtudied

ſtudied by *Hebrew* or *Greek* Skill, fails of its only End, till it leads and brings us to an *Eſſential God within us*, to feel and find all that which the Scriptures ſpeak of God, of Man, of Life and Death, of Good and Evil, of Heaven and Hell, as *Eſſentially* verified in our own Souls. For all is within Man that can be either Good or Evil to him: God *within Him* is his divine Life, his divine Light, and his divine Love: Satan *within Him* is his Life of *Self*, of *earthly Wiſdom*, of diabolical Falſeneſs, Wrath, Pride, and Vanity of every Kind. There is no middle way between theſe two. He that is not under the Power of the one, is under the Power of the Other. And the Reaſon is, man was created in and under the Power of the divine Life; ſo far therefore as he loſes or turns from *this Life* of God, So far he falls under the Power of *Self*, of *Satan*, and *Worldly Wiſdom*. When St *Peter*, full of an *human good* Love towards Chriſt, adviſed him to avoid his ſufferings, Chriſt rejected him with a *Get thee behind me Satan*, and only gave this Reaſon for it, for thou *Savoureſt not the Things that be of God, but the Things that be of Men*. A plain Proof, that whatever is not of and from the holy Spirit of God in us, however plauſible it may outwardly ſeem to Men, to their Wiſdom, and human Goodneſs, is yet in itſelf Nothing elſe but the Power of *Satan in us*. And as St Paul

St Paul ſaid truly of himſelf, *By the Grace of God I am what I am*, ſo every *Wiſe*, every *Scribe*, every *Diſputer of this world*, every *Truſter* to the Strength of his own rational Learning, every one that is under the Power of his own fallen Nature, never free from Deſires of Honours and Preferments, ever thirſting to be rewarded for his theological Abilities, ever fearing to be abaſed and deſpiſed, always thankful to thoſe who flatter him with his diſtinguiſhed Merit, every one that is ſuch, be he who he will, may as *truly ſay of himſelf*, Through my turning and Truſting to ſomething elſe than the *Grace* and *Inſpiration* of God's Spirit, *I am what I am*. For Nothing elſe hinders any Profeſſor of Chriſt from being able truly to ſay with St *Paul*, *God forbid that I ſhould glory in any Thing but the Croſs of Chriſt*, by *which I am crucified to the World*, and the *World to me*. Nothing makes him incapable of finding *That* which St *Paul* found, when He ſaid, *I can do all Things through Chriſt that Strengthneth me*; nothing hinders all this, but his Diſregard of a *Chriſt within him*, his chuſing to have a religion of ſelf, of *Laborious* Learning, and *worldly* Greatneſs, rather than be ſuch a Goſpel *fool for Chriſt*, as to renounce all that which he renounced, and to ſeek no more earthly honour and Praiſe than he did, and to will Nothing, know Nothing, ſeek Nothing, but that which the Spirit of God

and

and Chriſt knows, wills, and ſeeks in Him. Here, and here alone, lies the Chriſtian's full and certain Power of *overcoming ſelf*, the *devil*, and the *world*. But Chriſtians, ſeeking and turning to any thing elſe, but to be led and inſpired by the *one Spirit* of God and Chriſt, will bring forth a *Chriſtendom* that in the Sight of God will have no other Name, than a ſpiritual *Babylon*, a ſpiritual *Egypt*, and *Sodom*, a Scarlet *Whore*, a devouring *Beaſt*, and *red Dragon*. For all theſe names belong to all men, however learned, and to all Churches, whether greater or leſs, in which the Spirit of this World has any ſhare of Power. This was the Fall of the *whole Church* ſoon after the Apoſtolic Ages; and all *human Reformations*, begun by eccleſiaſtical *Learning*, and ſupported by Civil Power, will ſignify little or Nothing, nay often make things worſe, till all Churches, dying to all own *Will*, all own *Wiſdom*, all own *Advancement*, ſeek for no *Reforming Power* but from that Spirit of God which converted Sinners, Publicans, Harlots, Jews, and Heathens into an holy apoſtolical Church at the firſt, a Church which knew they were of God, that they belonged to God, by that Spirit which He had given them, and which worked in them.

Ye are not in the Fleſh, ſays the Apoſtle, but in the *Spirit*; but then he adds, as the

only Ground of this, *if ſo be that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you*; ſurely he means, if ſo be ye are moved, guided, and governed by that which the Spirit wills, works, and inſpires within you. And then to ſhew the abſolute Neceſſity of this Life of God in the ſoul, he adds, *if any man hath not* the *Spirit of Chriſt, he is none* of *his*——And that this is the State to which God has appointed and called all Chriſtians, he thus declares, *God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your Hearts*, crying, Abba, Father. Gal. iv. 6. The ſame Thing, moſt ſurely, as if he had ſaid, Nothing in you can *Cry*, or *Pray* to God as *its Father*, but the Spirit of his ſon Chriſt come to Life in you. Which is alſo as true of *every Tendency* in the Soul towards God or Goodneſs; ſo much as there is of it, ſo much there is of the *ſeed of the Woman* ſtriving to bring forth a *full Birth* of Chriſt in the Soul.

Lo, I am always with you, ſays the holy Jeſus, *even to the End of the World*. How is he with us? Not *outwardly*, every illiterate Man knows; not *inwardly*, ſays many a learned Doctor, becauſe a *Chriſt within* us is as groſs Enthuſiaſm, or Quakeriſm, as the *Light within us*.——How then ſhall the faith of the common Chriſtian find any Comfort in theſe words of Chriſt's promiſe, unleſs the Spirit brings him into a Remem-

brance and Belief, that Chriſt is in him, and with him, as the *Vine* is with and in the Branch. Chriſt ſays, *Without me ye can do Nothing*; and alſo, if any man *loves me, my Father will Love him, and we will come unto Him*, and *make our Abode with Him*. Now if without Him we can do Nothing, then all the Love that a Man can poſſibly have for Chriſt, muſt be from the Power and Life of Chriſt in Him; and from *ſuch* a Love, *ſo* begotten, Man has the Father and the Son dwelling and making their Abode in Him. What higher Proof, or fuller Certainty can there be, that the *Whole Work* of Redemption in the Soul of Man is and can be *Nothing elſe*, but the inward, continual, immediate Operation of Father, Son, and holy Spirit, raiſing up again their own firſt Life in the Soul, to which our firſt Father dyed?

Again, Chriſt, after his Glorification in Heaven, ſays, Behold I STAND at the DOOR and KNOCK. He does not ſay, Behold ye *have me* in the Scriptures. Now what is the DOOR at which Chriſt, at the Right-hand of God in Heaven, KNOCKS? Surely it is the *Heart*, to which Chriſt is always preſent. He goes on, IF ANY MAN HEARS MY VOICE; how *hears*, but by the hearing of the Heart, or *what Voice*, but that which is the *Speaking* or *Sounding* of Chriſt within Him? He adds, AND OPENS THE DOOR,

DOOR, that is, opens his Heart for me, I WILL COME IN TO HIM, that is, will be a living holy Nature, and Spirit born *within him*, AND SUP WITH HIM, and HE WITH ME. Revelat. Behold the laſt finiſhing Work of a Redeeming Jeſus, entered into the Heart that opens to him, bringing forth the Joy, the Bleſſing, and Perfection of that firſt Life of God in the Soul, which was loſt by the Fall, ſet forth as a *Supper*, or Feaſt of the Heavenly Jeſus with the Soul, and the Soul with him. Can any one juſtly call it Enthuſiaſm to ſay, that this *ſupping* of the Soul with this glorified Chriſt within it, muſt mean ſomething more heavenly tranſacted in the Soul than that laſt Supper which he celebrated with his Diſciples, whilſt He was with them in Fleſh. For that Supper of Bread and Wine was ſuch as a *Judas* could partake of, and could only be an *outward Type* or Signification of that *inward and bleſſed* Nouriſhment, with which the Believing Soul ſhould be feaſted, when the glorified Son of God ſhould as a *Creating Spirit* enter into us, quickening, and raiſing up his own heavenly Nature and Life within us. Now this *continual Knocking* of Chriſt at the Door of the Heart, ſets forth the Caſe or Nature of a continual immediate divine Inſpiration within us; it is always with us, but there muſt be an opening

of the Heart to it; and though it is always there, yet it is only felt and found by those who are attentive to it, depend upon, and humbly wait for it.——Now let any one tell me how he can believe any Thing of *this Voice* of Christ, how he can listen to it, hear, or obey it, but by such a Faith, as keeps him *habitually turned* to an immediate constant Inspiration of the Spirit of Christ within him? Or how any *heathenish profane* Person can do more *Despite* to this Presence and Power of Christ in his *own Soul*, or more effectually lead others into it, than that *Ecclesiastic*, who makes a Mock at the *Light* within, a Christ *within*, and openly blasphemes that Faith, and Hope, and Trust, which solely rely upon being *moved* by *the Spirit*, as their only Power of doing that which is right, and good, and pious, either towards God or Man.——*Let every Man, whom this concerns, lay it to Heart.*——Time, and the Things of Time will soon have an End; and he that in Time trusts to any Thing but the Spirit and Power of God working in his Heart, will be ill fitted to enter into Eternity; God must be *all in all* in us here, or we cannot be his hereafter.——*Time* works only for Eternity; and Poverty eternal must as certainly follow him, who dies only fully stuffed with human Learning, as he who dies only full of Worldly Riches.——The Folly of thinking to have any divine Learning, but

that

that which the holy Spirit teaches, or to make ourſelves rich in Knowledge towards God, by Heaps of *Common-Place* Learning crowded into our Minds, will leave us as dreadfully cheated, as that rich *Builder of Barns* in the Goſpel, to whom it was ſaid, *Thou Fool, this Night ſhall thy Soul be required of Thee. And then, whoſe ſhall all theſe Things be?* Luke xii. So is every Man that treaſures up a *Religious Learning* that comes not *wholly* from the Spirit of God.——But to return. To this inward continual Attention to the continual working of the holy Spirit within us, the Apoſtle calls us in theſe Words, *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh: for if they eſcaped not, who refuſed him that ſpoke on Earth, much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn from Him, that ſpeaketh from Heaven*, Heb. xii. 25. Now what is this Speaking *from Heaven*, which it is ſo dangerous to refuſe, or reſiſt? Surely not *outward Voices* from Heaven. Or what could the Apoſtle's Advice ſignify to us, unleſs it be ſuch a Speaking *from Heaven*, as we may and muſt be *always* either obeying or refuſing?—— St *James* ſaith, *Reſiſt the Devil*, and *he will flee from you*. What Devil? Surely not an outward Creature or Spirit, that tempts us by an outward Power. Or what *Reſiſtance* can we make to the Devil, but that of inwardly *falling away*, or *turning from* the

Workings of his evil Nature and Spirit within us?——They therefore who call us from *waiting* for, depending upon, and attending to the continual ſecret Inſpirations and Breathings of the holy Spirit within us, call us to RESIST *God* in the ſame manner as the Apoſtle exhorts us to reſiſt the Devil. For God being only a Spiritual Good, and the Devil our Spiritual Evil, neither the one nor the other can be reſiſted, or not reſiſted by us, but ſo far as their Spiritual Operations *within* us are either *turned from*, or *obeyed* by us.——St. *James* having ſhewn us, that *Reſiſting* the Devil is the only Way to make him flee from us, that is, to loſe his Power in us, immediately adds, how we are to behave towards God, that He *may not flee* from us, or his holy Work be ſtopped in us. *Draw near*, ſaith he, to *God*, and *God will draw near to you.* What is this Drawing near? Surely not by any local Motion, either in God or us. But the ſame is meant, as if he had ſaid, *Reſiſt not God*, that is, let his holy Will within you have its full work; keep wholly, obediently attentive to *That* which he is, and has, and does within you, and then *God will draw near to you*, that is, will more and more manifeſt the Power of his holy Preſence in you, and make you more and more *Partakers* of *the divine Nature.* Farther, what a Blindneſs is it in the forementioned

Writers,

Writers, to charge private Perſons with the *Enthuſiaſm* of holding the Neceſſity, and Certainty of continual immediate Inſpiration, and to attack them as Enemies to the *Eſtabliſhed Church*, when every Body's Eyes ſee, that *Collect* after *Collect*, in the Eſtabliſhed *Liturgy*, teaches and requires them to believe, and pray for the *Continual Inſpiration* of the Spirit, as that *alone*, by which they can have the *leaſt good Thought, or Deſire?* Thus, "O God, Foraſmuch as without Thee we are not able to pleaſe Thee, mercifully Grant that thy holy Spirit may *in all Things* direct and Rule our Hearts." Is it poſſible for words more ſtrongly to expreſs the Neceſſity of a *Continual divine Inſpiration?* Or can Inſpiration be *higher*, or more *immediate* in *Prophets* and *Apoſtles*, than that which *directs*, that which *rules* our Hearts, not now and then, but in *all Things?* Or can the abſolute Neceſſity of this be more fully declared, than by ſaying, that if it is not in this Degree both of Height and continuance in and over our Hearts, Nothing that is done by us can be pleaſing to God, that is, can have any Union with him?

Now the Matter is not at all about the *different Effects* or *Works* proceeding from Inſpiration, as whether by it a Man be made a *Saint* in Himſelf, or ſent by God with a *prophetic* Meſſage to others, this af-

fects not the *Nature* and *Neceſſity* of Inſpiration, which is juſt as great, juſt as neceſſary in itſelf to *all true Goodneſs*, as to all *true Propheſy*.——All Scripture is of divine Inſpiration. But why ſo? *Becauſe holy men of Old, Spake* as *they were moved* by *the Holy Ghoſt*. Now the above Collect as well as Chriſt and his Apoſtles oblige us in like manner to hold, that all *Holineſs is by divine Inſpiration*, and that therefore there could have been no *holy men* of old, or in any latter Times, but ſolely for this Reaſon, becauſe They LIVED *as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt*. Again, The Liturgy prays thus, " O God, from whom all good Things do come, grant that by thy holy Inſpiration we may think thoſe Things that be good, and by thy merciful Guiding may perform the Same."——Now, if in any of my Writings I have ever ſaid any thing *higher*, or *farther* of the Nature and Neceſſity of *continual divine Inſpiration*, than this Church-Prayer does, I refuſe no Cenſure that ſhall be paſſed upon me. But if I have, from all that we know of *God*, of *Nature*, and *Creature*, ſhewn the utter Impoſſibility of any Kind, or Degree of Goodneſs to be in us, but from the *divine Nature living* and *Breathing* in us, if I have ſhewn that all Scripture, Chriſt and his Apoſtles, over and over ſay the ſame Thing; that our *Church Liturgy*

Liturgy is daily praying according to it; What kinder Thing can I ſay of thoſe *Churchmen* who accuſe me of *Enthuſiaſm*, than that which Chriſt ſaid of his blind Crucifiers, *Father forgive them, for they know not what they do.*

It is to no Purpoſe to object to all this, that theſe Kingdoms are over-run with Enthuſiaſts of all Kinds, and that *Moravians* with their ſeveral Diviſions, and *Methodiſts* of various Kinds, are every where acting in the Wildeſt Manner, under the Pretence of being called *and led by the Spirit.* Be it ſo, or not ſo, is a matter I meddle not with; nor is the Doctrine I am upon in the leaſt affected by it. For what an Argument would this be; *Enthuſiaſts of the preſent and former Ages* have made a bad uſe of the Doctrine of being *led by the Spirit* of *God.* Ergo, He *is enthuſiaſtic*, or *helps forward Enthuſiaſm, who preaches up the Doctrine of being led* by *the Spirit* of *God.* Now abſurd as this is, was any of my Accuſers as high in *Genius*, as *bulky* in Learning, as *Coloſſus* was in Stature, He would be at a Loſs to bring a ſtronger Argument than this to prove me an Enthuſiaſt, or an Abettor of them.

But as I do not begin to doubt about the *Neceſſity*, the *Truth*, and *Perfection* of Goſpel Religion, when told that *whole Nations* and

and Churches have, under a Pretence of Regard to it, and for the Sake of it, done all the *bad Things* that can be charged upon this or that *Leading Enthuſiaſt*, whether you call thoſe bad Things, *Schiſm*, *Perjury*, *Rebellion*, *Worldly Craft*, and *Hypocriſy*, &c. So I give not up the *Neceſſity*, the *Truth*, and *Perfection* of looking wholly to the Spirit of God and Chriſt *within me*, as my *promiſed Inſpirer*, and *only Worker* of all that can be good in me, I give not this up, becauſe in this, or that Age, both Spiritual Pride and Fleſhly Luſts have proſpered by it, or becauſe Satan has often led People into all the Heights of *Self-Glory*, and *Self-Seeking*, under a Pretence of being *inſpired* with Goſpel *Humility*, and Goſpel *Self-denial*.

Another Charge upon me, equally falſe, and I may ſay, more ſenſeleſs, is that I am a declared Enemy to the *Uſe* of *Reaſon* in *Religion*. And Why? Becauſe in all my Writings, I teach *that Reaſon is to be denied*, &c. I own, I have not only taught this, but have again and again proved the *abſolute Neceſſity* of it. And this, becauſe Chriſt has made it *abſolutely Neceſſary*, by ſaying, *Whoſoever will come after me, let him deny himſelf*, &c. For how can a Man *deny himſelf*, without *denying* his Reaſon, unleſs Reaſon be no Part of Himſelf? Or how can a rational Creature, whoſe chief Diſtinction

from Brutes is that of his Reaſon, be called to deny himſelf any other Way, than by denying that which is peculiar to Himſelf? Let the Matter be thus expreſſed, Man is not to deny his Reaſon. Well, how then? Why (N. B.) He is only to deny *himſelf*. Can there be a greater Folly of Words? And yet it is their Wiſdom of Words, who allow the *Denying of ſelf* to be good Doctrine, but boggle and cry out at the *denying of Reaſon* as quite bad. For how can a Man deny *himſelf*, but by denying That which is the *Life*, and *Spirit*, and Power of *Self?*—What makes a Man a Sinner? Nothing but the Power and Working of his *Natural Reaſon*. And therefore, if our *natural Reaſon* is not to be *denied*, we muſt keep up and follow That which works every Sin that ever was, or can be in us. For we can Sin no where, or in any Thing, but where our *Natural* Reaſon or Underſtanding has its Power in us.——What is meant in all Scripture by the *Fleſh* and its Works? Is it ſomething diſtinct, and different from the Workings of our *rational and intelligent* Nature? No, it is our whole intelligent rational Nature that conſtitutes the *Fleſh* or the *Carnal Man*, who could not be criminally ſo, any more than the Beaſts, but becauſe his Carnality has all its Evil from his intelligent Nature, or *Reaſon*, being the Life and Power of

of it. And every Thing which our Lord ſays of *Self*, is ſo much ſaid of our *natural* Reaſon; and all that the Scripture ſays of the Fleſh and its evil Nature, is ſo much ſaid of the evil State of our *Natural Reaſon*, which therefore is, ought, and muſt be denyed, in the ſame manner and Degree as *ſelf* and Fleſh are, and muſt he denyed.

I have elſewhere ſhewn the Groſs Darkneſs and Ignorance which govern that which is called *Metaphyſicks* in the Schools, that it is ſo great, that if *you was to ſay, that God firſt creates a Soul* out of Nothing, and *when that is done, then takes* an *Underſtanding Faculty and puts it into* it, *after that, adds a* Will, and *then* a Memory, *all as independently made, as when* a Taylor *firſt makes the Body* of *a Coat*, and *then adds* Sleeves and Pockets *to it*; was *you to ſay this, the Schools of Deſcartes, Malebranche*, or *Locke, could have Nothing to ſay againſt it* *.

And here Truth obliges me to ſay, that *Scholaſtic Divinity* is in as great Ignorance about the Moſt fundamental Truths of the Goſpel, as I have again and again ſhewn, in Regard to the Nature of the *Fall of Man*, and all the Scripture Expreſſions concerning the *new Birth*; and here alſo concerning the Doctrine of a Man's *denying himſelf*, which modern Learning ſuppoſes to be poſſible *without*, or different *from* a Man's denying his

* Spirit of Love, Part I. p. 30.

his *own natural Reaſon*; Which is an Abſurdity of the greateſt Magnitude. For what is *Self*, but that which a Man *is* and *has* in his *natural Capacity?* Or what is the *Fullneſs* of his *Natural Capacity*, but the Strength and Power of his Reaſon? How then can any Man *deny Himſelf*, but by denying that which gives *Self* its whole Nature, Name, and Power? If Man was not a *Rational* Creature, he could not be called to deny himſelf, he could not need, or receive the Benefit and Goodneſs of *Self-Denial*: No Man therefore can obey the Precept of denying Himſelf, or have any Benefit or Goodneſs from it, but ſo far as he denies, or dies to his own *natural Reaſon*, becauſe the *Self* of Man and the *Natural Reaſon* of Man are Strictly the ſame Thing.——— *Again*, our Bleſſed Lord ſaid in his Agony, *Not my Will, but thine be done.* And had not this been the Form of his *whole Life*, He had not lived without Sin.——Now Thus to deny our own Will, that God's Will may be done in us, is the *Height of our Calling*; and ſo far as we keep from our own *Natural Will*, ſo far we keep from Sin. But now, if our own Natural Will, as having all ſin and evil in it, is *always* to be denied, whatever it coſts us, I would fain know, how our *Natural Reaſon* can *ever* eſcape, or how we can deny our own Will,

Will, and not deny that rational or intelligent Power, in and from which the Will has its whole Exiſtence and continual direction? Or how there can be always a *Badneſs* of our *own Will*, which is not the *Badneſs* of our *own natural* intellectual Power? Therefore it is a Truth of the utmoſt Certainty, that as much as we are obliged to deny *our own* Natural Will, that the Will of God may be done in us, ſo much are we obliged to deny our *own natural Reaſon* and Underſtanding, that our *own Will* may not be done, or followed by us. For whoever lives to his own natural Reaſon, he neceſſarily lives to his own natural Will. For our natural Will, in whatever State it is, is Nothing elſe but our Natural Reaſon *willing* this or that.

Now hard as this may ſeem to *unregenerate Nature*, and yet harder to Nature highly exalted, and big with the Glory of all That, which *Wits*, *Poets*, *Orators*, *Critics*, *Sophiſts*, and *Hiſtorians* have enriched it with, yet true it is, and a Truth as certain as the Fall of Man, that this full Denial of our own *natural Will*, and our own *Natural Reaſon*, is the only poſſible Way for divine *Knowledge*, divine *Light*, and divine *Goodneſs*, to have any Place or Power of Birth in us.—All other *religious* Knowledge, got any other Way, let it be as great as it will, is only great in Vanity, Emptyneſs, and Deluſion. For Nothing

thing but That which comes *immediately* from God, can have any Thing godly in it, and all that which comes from *Self*, and *natural Reaſon*, however outwardly coloured, can have no better a Nature within than *Self-ſeeking*, *Self-eſteem*, and *fleſhly Wiſdom*, which (*N. B.*) are thoſe *very works* of *the Devil* in us which Chriſt came into the World to deſtroy.——For the Efforts of natural Reaſon, and Self-abilities, to be great in *religious Knowledge* from our own *particular Talents*, are as *Satanical* Things as any we carry about us, and moſt of all fix us in the higheſt Contrariety to that State, which our Lord affirms to be abſolutely neceſſary.

Except ye be converted, and *become* as *little Children, ye cannot enter* into the Kingdom of God.——Now as ſure as this is neceſſary, ſo ſure is it, that no one can be thus converted, or come under the good Influence of this child-like Nature, till *natural Reaſon*, *Self*, and *own Will*, are all equally denied.——For all the Evil and Corruption of our fallen Nature conſiſts in this, it is an *awakened Life of own Reaſon*, *own Will broken off from God*, and ſo fallen into the *Selfiſh* Workings of its own earthly Nature.

Now whether this *Self* broken off from God reaſons, wills, and contends about the Difference of Scripture Words and Opinions, or reaſons againſt them all, the ſame

ſame evil State of fallen Nature, the ſame Loſs of Life, the ſame Separation from God, the ſame evil Tempers of Fleſh and Blood, will be equally ſtrengthened and inflamed by the one as by the other.——Hence it is, that Papiſts and Proteſtants are hating, fighting, and killing one another for the Sake of their *different excellent* Opinions, and yet, as to the *Luſts of the Fleſh*, the *Luſt of the Eye*, and *the Pride of Life*, they are in the higheſt Union and Communion with one Another. For if you expect a *zealous Proteſtant* to be *therefore* a new born Creature alive unto God, or a *zealous Papiſt* to be *therefore* dead to all divine Goodneſs, you may be ſaid to have lived in the World without either Eyes or Ears.——And the Reaſon why it muſt be ſo, is becauſe *bad* Syllogiſms *for* Tranſubſtantiation, and *better* Syllogiſms *againſt* it, ſignify no more towards the Caſting *Satan out of our Souls*, than a bad or better Taſte for Painting.

Hence alſo it is, that Chriſtendom, full of the niceſt Deciſions about Faith, Grace, Works, Merits, Satisfaction, Hereſies, Schiſms, *&c.* is full of all thoſe evil Tempers which prevailed in the heathen World, when none of theſe things were ever thought of.

A *Scholar*, pitying the Blindneſs and Folly of thoſe who live to themſelves in the Cares and Pleaſures of this vain Life, thinks himſelf

ſelf divinely employed, and to have eſcaped the Polutions of the World, becauſe he is, day after day, dividing, diſſecting, and mending Church-Opinions, fixing Hereſies here, Schiſms there; forgetting all the while, that a *carnal Self* and *natural Reaſon* have the doing of all that is done by this learned Zeal, and are as buſy and active in him, as in the *reaſoning* Infidel, or *projecting* Worldling. For where *Self is wholly denied*, there nothing can be called Hereſy, Schiſm, or Wickedneſs, but the Want of loving God with our whole Heart, and our Neighbour as ourſelves; nor any Thing be called Truth, Life, or Salvation, but the Spirit, Nature, and Power of Chriſt living and manifeſting itſelf in us, as it did in him. But where *Self*, or the *natural Man* is become great in Religious Learning, there the greater the Scholar, the more firmly will he be fixed in their Religion, whoſe *God is their Belly*. I *write not to Reaſon*, ſays the bleſſed *Jacob Behmen*; O Enthuſiaſm! ſays the Mouth of Learning: And yet *Jacob* ſaid as ſober a Truth, as if he had ſaid, *I write not to Self* and *own Will*; for natural *Reaſon*, *Self* and *own Will*, always did, and always muſt ſee through the ſame Eyes, and hear through the ſame Ears. Now let it only be ſuppoſed, that *Behmen* and myſelf, when we ſpeak of *natural Reaſon*, mean only the *Natural Man*

(as is over and over declared by us) and then *Behmen*'s saying, that he writes neither *from* Reason, nor *to the natural Reason* of others, is only saying that very same Thing as St *Paul* says, that the *natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him,* (N. B.) *neither can he know them,* (N. B.) *because they are Spiritually discerned.*

But that I may fully shew the Perverseness of my Accusers, in charging me with denying the *Use of Reason in Religion*, see here a Word or two of what I have said at large, and in the plainest Words, more than twenty-four years ago, which Doctrine I have maintained in all that I have since wrote.——My Words are these.

" You shall see Reason possessed of all " that belongs to it. I will grant it to have " as *great a Share* in the good Things of " *Religion*, as in the good Things of *this* " *Life*; that it can *assist* the Soul, just as it " can assist the *Body*, that it has the *same* " Power and Virtue in the *Spiritual*, that it " has in the *natural* World; that it can " *communiate* to us as much of the one, as " of the other, and is of the same *Use* and " *Importance* in the one as in the other. Can " you ask more?" All which I thus make out in the following Manner.

" Man,

" Man, considered as a Member of this " World, who is to have his Share of the " *Good* that is in it, is a *sensible*, and a *rational* " Creature, that is, he has a certain Number " of Senses, as Seeing, Hearing, Tasting, Touching, and Smelling, by which " he is sensible of that which the outward " World, in which he is placed, can do for " him, or communicate to him, and so is " sensible of what Kind and Degree of " Happiness he can have from it.

" Now besides these Organs of Sense, he " has a Power or Faculty of *Reasoning* upon the Ideas, which he has received from " these Senses.

" Now how is it, that the *good* Things of " this World are communicated to Man? " How is he put in possession of them? To " what Part of him are they proposed? Are " his *Senses*, or his *Reason*, the Means of his " having so much as he has or can have " from this World?

" Now here, you must degrade *Reason* " just as much as it is degraded by Religion, and are obliged to set it as low with " Respect to the Things of this World, as " it is set with Respect to the Things of the " Spiritual World. It is no more the Means " of Communicating the good Things of the " one, than of the other. And as St *Paul* says, " *the Natural Man cannot receive the Things* " *of the Spirit of God*, for this Reason, *be-*

" *cauſe they are Spiritually diſcerned*; ſo you
" muſt of Neceſſity ſay, the *Rational Man*
" cannot receive the Things of this
" World, for this Reaſon, becauſe they are
" *ſenſibly* received, that is, by the Organs of
" Senſe. Reaſon therefore has no higher
" Office or Power in the Things of this
" World, than in the Things of Religion;
" and Religion does no more Violence to
" your Reaſon, or rejects it any other Way,
" than all the good Things of this World
" reject it; it is not *Seeing*, it is not *Hear-*
" *ing*, *Taſting*, or *Feeling* the Things of this
" Life; it can ſupply the Place of no one of
" theſe Senſes.

" Now it is only thus *helpleſs* and *uſeleſs*
" in Religion: it is neither Seeing, nor Hear-
" ing, Taſting, nor Feeling of Spiritual
" Things; therefore in the Things of Re-
" ligion, and in the Things of this World,
" it has one and the ſame *Inſignificance*.——
" It is the *Senſibility* of the Soul that muſt
" receive what this World can communicate
" to it; it is the *Senſibility* of the Soul that
" muſt receive what God can communicate:
" Reaſon may follow after in either Caſe,
" and view through its own Glaſs what
" is done, but it can do no more. Reaſon
" may be here of the ſame Service to us,
" as when we want any of the Enjoyments
" of this Life; it may direct us how and

" where

" where they are to be had; It may take
" away a Cover from our Eyes, or open our
" Window-Shutters when we want the
" Light; but it can do no more towards *See-*
" *ing*, than to make way for the Light to act
" upon our Eyes. This is all its Office and
" Ability in the Things of Religion; it may
" remove that which hinders the *Senſibility*
" of the Soul, or prevents the divine Light's
" acting upon it, but it can do no more; be-
" cauſe the Faculty of Reaſoning is only
" the Activity of the Mind upon its own
" Ideas or Images, which the Senſes have
" cauſed it to form from that which has
" been ſtirred up in them, but has Nothing
" of the Nature of that which it ſpeculates
" upon by Ideas; it does not become dark,
" when it reaſons upon the Cauſe or Nature
" of Darkneſs, nor becomes Light, when it
" reaſons about it; neither is it Religion, nor
" gets any Thing of the Nature of Religion,
" when it is wholly taken up in Deſcriptions
" and Definitions of religious Doctrines and
" Virtues.

" For the *Good* of Religion is like the
" Good of Food and Drink to the Creature
" that wants it. And if inſtead of giving
" ſuch a one Bread and Wine, you ſhould
" teach him to ſeek for Relief by attending
" to clear Ideas of the Nature of Bread, of
" different ways of making it, *&c.* he would

" be left to dye in the Want of Suſtenance,
" juſt as the Religion of Reaſoning leaves
" the Soul to periſh in the Want of that
" Good which it was to have from Reli-
" gion. And yet as a Man may have the
" Benefit of Food much aſſiſted by the right
" uſe of his Reaſon, though Reaſon has not
" the Good of Food in it, ſo a Man may have
" the Good of Religion much aſſiſted and
" ſecured to him, by the right uſe of his
" Reaſon, though Reaſon has not the *Good*
" of Religion in it. And as it would be
" great Folly and Perverſeneſs, to accuſe a
" Man as an Enemy to the true Uſe of Rea-
" ſoning about Food, becauſe he declares
" that Reaſon is not Food, nor can ſupply
" the Place of it, ſo it is equally ſuch, to ac-
" cuſe a Man as an Enemy to the Uſe of
" Reaſoning in Religion, becauſe he declares
" that Reaſoning is not Religion, nor can
" ſupply the Place of it. We have no Want
" of Religion, but becauſe we want to have
" more of the divine Nature in us than
" we have in our fallen Nature. But if this
" be the Truth of the Matter (and who can
" deny it?) then we are ſure that nothing
" can be our Good in Religion, but that
" which communicates to us ſomething of
" God, or which alters our State of Exiſtence
" in God, and makes us Partakers of the
" divine Nature, in ſuch a Manner and De-

" gree

" gree as we wanted. What a Folly is it then " to put any Truſt in a Religion of *rational* " *Notions* and Opinions logically deduced from " Scripture Words? Do we not ſee Sinners " of all Sorts, and Men under the Power " of every corrupt Paſſion, equally zealous " for ſuch a Religion? Proof enough, that " it has not the good of Religion in it, nor " any Contrariety to the Vices of the Heart; " it neither kills them, nor is killed by " them. For as Pride, Hypocriſy, Envy or " Malice, do not take away from the Mind " its Geometrical or Critical Abilities; ſo a " Man may be moſt logical in his Religion " of Reaſon, Words, Doctrines, and Opi- " nions, when he has Nothing of the true " Good of Religion in Him.

" But as ſoon as it is known and confeſſed, " that all the Happineſs or Miſery of all " Creatures conſiſts only in this, as they are " *more* or *leſs* poſſeſſed of God, or as they " differently partake of the divine Nature, " then it muſt be equally known, that No- " thing but God can do or be any religious " Good to us, and alſo that God cannot do, " or be any religious Good to us, but by the " Communication of *himſelf*, or the Ma- " nifeſtation of his *own Life* within us."

Hence may be ſeen the great and like Blindneſs both of Infidels and Chriſtians; the one in truſting to their own Reaſon dwelling

in its own logical Concluſions; the other in truſting to their own Reaſon dwelling in learned Opinions about Scripture Words and Phraſes, and Doctrines built upon them. " For as ſoon as it is known and confeſſed, " that *God is all in all*, that in him we *live* " *and move* and *have our Being*, that we can " have Nothing *ſeparately*, or *out* of him, " but every Thing *in* Him, that we have " no Being or Degree of Being but in Him, " that He can give us Nothing as our good " but Himſelf, nor any degree of Salvation " from our fallen Nature, but in ſuch De- " gree as he again Communicates ſomething " more of Himſelf to us, as ſoon as this " is known, then it is known with the ut- " moſt Evidence, that to put a religious " Truſt in our own Reaſon, whether Con- " fined to itſelf, or Working in Doctrines " about Scripture Words, has the Nature " of that ſame Idolatry that puts a religious " Truſt in the *Sun*, a departed *Saint*, or a " graven *Image* *." And as *Image-Worſhip* has often boaſted of its divine Power, becauſe of the Wonders of Zeal and Devotion that have been raiſed thereby in thouſands, and ten thouſands of its Followers, ſo it is no Marvel, if *Opinion-Worſhip* ſhould often have

* Demonſtration of the groſs Errors in the Plain Account, &c. p. 272, &c. 188, &c.

have and boaſt of the Same Effects.——But the Truth of the whole Matter lies here: As the WORD manifeſted in the Fleſh or become Man is the one Mediator, or Reſtorer of Union between God and Man, ſo to ſeeing Eyes it muſt be evident, that Nothing but this one Mediatorial Nature of Chriſt, *eſſentially* brought to Life in our Souls, can be our Salvation through Chriſt Jeſus. For that which ſaved and exalted that Humanity in which Chriſt dwelt, muſt be the Salvation of every human Creature in the World. But to return. What poor divinity Knowledge comes from great *Scholars*, and great *Readers*, may be ſufficiently ſeen from the two following judicious Quotations in a *late Diſſertation on Enthuſiaſm*; the one is taken from Dr. *Warburton*'s ſermons, the other from a *Paſtoral Letter* of Mr *Stinſtra*, a Preacher among the *Mennoniſts of Frieſland*. That from Dr Warburton ſtands thus: " By them (that is, by the Writings of the " New Teſtament) the prophetic Promiſe " of our Saviour, that the *Comforter* ſhould " abide for ever, was *eminently* fullfilled. " For though his ordinary Influence *occaſion-* " *ally* aſſiſts the Faithful, yet his *conſtant A-* " *bode* and *Supreme Illumination* is in the Sa- " cred Scriptures *." Dr *Warburton*'s Doctrine

* Diſſertation, p. 10.

trine is this, that the inſpired Books of the New Teſtament are that *Comforter*, or *Spirit of Truth*, and Illuminator, which is meant by Chriſt's being *always* with his Church.—Let us therefore put the Doctor's Doctrine into the Letter of the Text, which will beſt ſhew how true or falſe it is.

Our Lord ſays, *It is expedient for you that I go away*, or *the Comforter will not come*; that is, it is expedient for you that I *leave off* teaching you in Words, that ſound only into your *outward Ears*, that you may have the *ſame Words* in Writing, for your *outward Eyes* to look upon; for if I do not depart from this vocal Way of Teaching you, the Comforter will not come, that is, ye will not have the Comfort of *my Words written on Paper*. But if I go away, I will ſend Written Books, which ſhall lead you into ſuch a *Truth of Words*, as you could not have whilſt they were only ſpoken from my Mouth; but being written on Paper, they will be my *ſpiritual, heavenly, conſtant Abode* with you, and the *moſt ſupreme Illumination* you can receive from Me.

Chriſt ſays further; I *have many Things to ſay unto you, but ye cannot bear them now: howbeit when He, the Spirit* of *Truth, is come, He ſhall guide you into all Truth; for He ſhall not ſpeak of Himſelf, for He ſhall receive of mine*, and *ſhall ſhew it unto you*; that is, though

though you cannot be ſufficiently inſtructed from my Words at *preſent*, yet when they ſhall hereafter come to you in Written Books, they will give you a knowledge of all Truth, for they ſhall not Speak of themſelves, but ſhall receive words from me, and ſhew them unto you. *Again*, Chriſt ſays, *Theſe things have I ſpoken unto you in Proverbs; but the Time cometh*, when I ſhall no more *ſpeak unto you in Proverbs, but will ſhew* you *plainly of the Father*. That is, hitherto you have only had ſpoken Proverbs from me, and therefore you have not plainly known the Father; but the time cometh when theſe *ſpoken* Proverbs ſhall be put into *Writing*, and then you ſhall plainly know the Father. *Again*, Chriſt adds, *Ye now therefore have Sorrow, but I will ſee you again*, and *your hearts ſhall rejoice, and your Joy no Man taketh from you*. That is, you are now troubled at my perſonal Departure from you, but ſome written Books ſhall be *my ſeeing you again*, and in that Viſit you ſhall have ſuch Joy as cannot be taken from you.

Chriſt alſo ſays, if *any Man loves me, my Father will Love him, and we will come unto him and make our Abode with Him:* That is, according to the Doctor's Theology, certain Books of Scripture will come to him, and make their Abode with him; for he expreſsly confines the *conſtant Abode* and

ſupreme

ſupreme Illumination of God to the holy Scriptures. Therefore (horrible to ſay) God's inward Preſence, his operating Power of Life and Light in our Souls, his Dwelling in us, and We in Him, are ſomething of a lower Nature, that only may *occaſionally* happen, and have *leſs* of God in them than the dead Letter of Scripture, which alone is his *Conſtant Abode* and *Supreme illumination.* ———Miſerable Fruits of a paradoxical Genius!

Chriſt from Heaven ſays, *Behold I ſtand at the Door, and knock; if any man hear my Voice, and open unto me, I will come into Him, and ſup with Him.* This is his true eminent *Fulfilling* of his prophetic Promiſe of being a Comforter, and Spirit of Truth to his Church to the end of the World. But according to the Doctor, we are to underſtand, that not the *heavenly Chriſt*, but the New Teſtament *continually* ſtands and knocks at the Door, wanting to enter into the Heart, and ſup with it; which is no better than holding, that when Chriſt calls himſelf Alpha and Omega, He means not himſelf, but the New Teſtament.——Again, *I am the Vine, ye are the Branches*; as *the Branch cannot bear Fruit of itſelf, except it abide* in *the Vine, no more can ye, except ye abide in me*; for *without me, ye can do Nothing.* Now take the Doctor's Comment, and then

the Truth of all these Words of Christ was only *temporary*, and could be true no longer, than till the Books of the *New Testament* were written; for then all this, which Christ had affirmed of himself, of the Certainty and Necessity of his Life and Power in them, ended in Christ, and passed over to the *Written Words* of the New Testament, and they are the true Vine, and we it's Branches, they are *That* without which *we can do Nothing*. For thus it must be, if, as the Doctor affirms, the Writings of the New Testament are that, by which we are to understand *the constant Abode and supreme Illumination of God in Man.*——Now absurd and even blasphemous as this Interpretation of the foregoing Text is, it must be evident to every Reader, that it is all the Doctor's own; for the Letter of Scripture is only made here to claim that Divinity to itself, which the Doctor has openly affirmed to be true of it.

Rabbi, says Nicodemus to Christ, *we know that thou art a Teacher come from God:* Now that which was here truly said of Christ in *the Flesh*, is the very Truth that must be said of the Scripture teaching in Ink and Paper; it is a *Teacher come from God*, and therefore fully to be believed, highly reverenced, and strictly followed. But as Christ's Teaching in the Flesh was only preparatory

to

to his future vital Teaching by the Spirit, ſo the Teaching of Scripture by words written with Ink and Paper is only preparatory, or introductory to all that *inward eſſential* Teaching of God, which is by his Spirit and Truth within us.——Every other Opinion of the holy Scripture, but that of an *outward Teacher* and Guide to God's *inward Teaching* and Illumination in our Souls, is but making an Idol-God of it: I ſay an Idol-God; for to thoſe who reſt in it as the *Conſtant Abode and Supreme Illumination* of *God with them*, it can be Nothing elſe. For, if Nothing of divine *Faith*, *Love*, *Hope*, or *Goodneſs*, can have the leaſt Birth, or Place in us, but by *divine Inſpiration*, they who think theſe Virtues may be ſufficiently raiſed in us by the Letter of Scripture, do in Truth and Reality make the Letter of Scripture their *Inſpiring God.*——The Apoſtles preached and wrote to the People by *divine Inſpiration.* But what do they ſay of their *inſpired Doctrine* and Teachings? What Virtue or Power was there in them? Do they ſay, that their Words and Teachings were the very *promiſed Comforter*, the *Spirit* of *Truth*, the *true Abode* and *Supreme Illumination* of God in the Souls of Men? So far from ſuch a blaſphemous Thought, that they affirm the direct contrary, and compare all their *inſpired* Teachings and Inſtructions

ſtructions to the *dead Works* of bare *Planting* and *Watering*, and which muſt continue dead, till *Life* comes into them from another and much higher Power. I *have planted*, ſays St Paul, Apollos *has watered*, but *God gave the Increaſe*. And then farther to ſhew that this Planting and Watering, which was the *higheſt Work* that an *inſpired* Apoſtle could do, was yet in itſelf to be conſidered as a lifeleſs powerleſs Thing, he adds, *So then*, neither *is He that planteth* any *Thing*, nor He that *Watereth*, but *God that giveth* the *Increaſe*.——But now, if this muſt be ſaid of all That which the *inſpired Apoſtles* taught in outward Words, that it was nothing in itſelf, was without Power, without Life, and only ſuch a *Preparation* towards Life as is that of Planting and Watering, muſt not that ſame be ſaid of their *inſpired Teachings*, when left behind them in Writing? For what elſe are the Apoſtolical Scriptures, but thoſe very Inſtructions and Teachings put into Writing, which they affirmed to be but bare Planting and Watering, quite powerleſs in themſelves, till the Living Spirit of God worked with them? Or will any one ſay, that what *Paul*, *Peter*, *John*, &c. ſpoke by Inſpiration from their own Mouths, was indeed but bare Planting and Watering, in order to be capable of receiving Life from God; but when theſe apoſtolical Teachings

and

and Inſtructions were written on Paper they were raiſed out of their firſt Inability, got the *Nature* of God himſelf, became *Spirit* and *Life*, and might be called the *great quickening* Power of God, or, as the Doctor ſays, the *Conſtant Abode* and *Supreme Illumination of his Spirit with us?*

It would be great Folly and Perverſeneſs to charge me here with ſlighting, or leſſening the true Value, Uſe, and Importance of the inſpired Apoſtolical Scriptures; for if the Charge was juſt, it muſt lie againſt Paul, and not againſt me, ſince I ſay nothing of them, but that which He ſays, and in his own expreſs Words, viz. that all their Labour of Preaching, inſtructing, and Writing by *divine Inſpiration*, had in themſelves no other Nature, Uſe, or Power, than that of ſuch Planting and Watering, as could not fructify till a higher Power than was in them gave Life and Growth to that which they planted and watered.

I exceedingly love, and highly reverence the divine Authority of the ſacred Writings of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts, and would gladly perſuade every one to be as deeply affected with them, and pay as profound a Regard to them, as they would to an *Elijah*, a St *John Baptiſt*, or a *Paul*, whom they knew to be immediately ſent from Heaven with God's Meſſage to them.——I reverence them

them as a literal Truth of and from God, as much the *greateſt heavenly Beſſing* that can be *outwardly* beſtowed upon us.——I reverence them as doing, or fitted to do all that good amongſt Chriſtians *now*, which the Apoſtles did in their Day, and as of the ſame Uſe and Benefit to the Church of every Age, as their *Planting* and *Watering* was to the firſt.

But now, if this is not thought that Fullneſs of Regard that is due to the holy Meſſengers of God; if any one will ſtill be ſo learnedly wiſe, as to affirm, that though Paul's Preaching in his Epiſtles, whilſt He was alive, was indeed only bare Planting and Watering, but the ſame Epiſtles, being publiſhed after his Death, got another Nature, became full of divine and living Power; ſuch a one has no Right to laugh (as the Doctor does) at the ſilly *Mahometan*, who believes the *Alcoran* to be *uncreated*. For wherever there is *divine Efficacy*, *there*, there muſt be an *uncreated* Power. And if, as the Doctor ſays, the Scriptures of the New Teſtament are the *only conſtant Abode* and *Supreme Illumination* of the Spirit of God with us, all that is ſaid of the *Eternal* Spirit of God, of the *uncreated Light*, might and ought to be ſaid of them; that they are the WORD that was God, was with God, and are our true Immanuel, or God within us.

I ſhall now only add this friendly hint to the Doctor, that he has a Remedy at hand in his own *Sermon*, how he may be delivered from thus groſsly Miſtaking the Spirit of the Goſpel, as well as the Law of Moſes.—St *Paul*, (ſays the Doctor) " had a quick " and lively Imagination, and an extenſive " and intimate Acquaintance with thoſe " Maſters in *moral Painting*, the claſſic " Writers, (N. B.) all which he proudly " ſacrificed to the Glory of the everlaſting " Goſpel *."

Now if the Doctor did that, though it was only from *Humility*, which he ſays the Apoſtle did *proudly*, ſuch Humility might be as great a Good to him, as that Pride was to the Apoſtle.——And indeed, one would have thought, that as ſoon as the Doctor had diſcovered theſe Writers to be only great Maſters in *moral Painting*, it ſhould have had the ſame effect upon him, as if he had found them great Maſters in Deluſion. For where there is Moral Painting, *there*, there is *moral Deluſion*. And the Spirit, the Life, the Purity, and divine Simplicity of Goſpel Truth is more eluded, loſt, and deſtroyed by *moral Paintings*, whether in Books or Pulpits, than by any material Colourings put upon Images of Wood or Clay,

* Sermon. Vol. I. p. 229.

Clay, to excite Spiritual Devotion in Churches.——Again, if the everlasting Gospel is now as glorious a Thing as it was in St *Paul*'s Days; if the highest, most accomplished classic Knowledge is so unsuitable to the Light and Spirit of the Gospel, that it is fit for Nothing but to be cast away, or as the Doctor says, to be *all sacrificed to the Glory of the Gospel*, how wonderful is it, that this should never come into his head from the Beginning to the End of his three long *Legation-Volumes*, or that he should come piping hot with fresh and fresh classic Beauties found out by himself in a *Shakespeare*, a *Pope*, &c. to preach from the Pulpit the divine Wisdom of a *Paul*, in renouncing all his great Classic Attainments, as mere loss and Dung, that by so doing he might *win Christ*, and *be found in him!*

Let it be supposed, that our Lord was to come again for a While in the Flesh, and that his coming was for this end, to do that for the Christian World *cumbered* with much Learning, which he did to poor *Martha* only *cumbered with much Serving*, who thereby neglected that *Good Part* which *Mary* had chosen; must we suppose that the Doctor would hasten to meet him with his *Sacred Alliance*, his Bundles of Pagan Trash, and hierogliphic Profundities, as his full Proof that Mary's *good Part*, which shall

never be taken from her, had been chosen for himself and all his Readers? As well might it be thought, that the *Pope* would come richly laden with his blessed *Images*, his heavenly *Decrees*, his divine *Bulls*, as *infallible* Proofs of his being born again from above, and solely devoted to the *one Thing Needful*.

Let the Doctor figure to himself the gaudy Pageantry of a divine high Mass in a *Romish Cathedral*; let him wonder at that flagrant daring Contrariety that it hath to that first Gospel-Church of Christ, viz. *where two or three are gathered together in my Name, there am I in the midst of them*; would he not be still fuller of Wonder, if he should hear the *Pope* declaring, that all this heathenish shew of invented Fopperies was his *projected Defence* of that first Church of Christ?—But if the Doctor would see a *Protestant* Wonder full as great, he need only look at his own theatrical parading Shew of heathen Mysteries, and heathenish Learning, set forth in highest Pomp. To what End? Why to bring forth, what he calls (as the Pope above) his *projected Defence* of *Christianity*.

O vainest of all vain Projects! For what is Christianity, but that which Christ was while on Earth? What can it be, but that which it is, and has from him? He is a King, who

who has all Power in Heaven and on Earth, and his Kingdom, like himſelf, is not of this World. Away then with the Projects of popiſh Pomp, and pagan Literature to ſupport it; they are as wiſe Contrivances, as a high *Tower of Babel* to defend it againſt the gates of Hell.

I come now to the Quotation from the paſtoral Letter of Mr. *Stinſtra*. "A judicious Writer, (ſays the Diſſertation) obſerves, that *Sound* Underſtanding and Reaſon are *That on* which, and by which, God *principally* operates, (N. B.) when he finds it proper to aſſiſt (N. B.) our *weakneſs* by his Spirit *."

I cannot more illuſtrate the Senſe, or extol the Judgment, both of the *Author*, and *Quoter* of this Striking Paſſage, than by the following Words.

"A judicious Naturaliſt obſerves, that *Sound* and *Strong* Lungs are that *on* which, and *by* which, the Air or Spirit of this World *principally* operates, when (N. B.) he finds it proper to aſſiſt (N. B.) the *Weakneſs* of our Lungs, by his Breathing into them."—Now if any right minded Man ſhould happen to find his Heart edified, his Underſtanding enlightened, by the above Paſſage on *divine Inſpiration*

* Diſſertation, p. 73.

he will be much pleaſed at my aſſuring him, that the Paſtoral Letter of Mr. *Stinſtra*, and the Diſſertation on Enthuſiaſm by Mr. *Green*, are from the Beginning to the End full as good, in every Reſpect, as that is.

Theſe two Inſtances are Proof enough, that as ſoon as any Man truſts to natural Abilities, Skill in Languages, and common-place Learning, as the true Means of entering into the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom which is Nothing elſe but Righteouſneſs, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt, he gives himſelf up to *certain Deluſion*, and can eſcape no *Error* that is popular, or that ſuits his State and Situation in the learned religious World.——He has ſold his Birth-right in the Goſpel State of *divine* Illumination, to make a Figure and Noiſe with the Sounding Braſs and Tinkling Cymbals of the natural Man.

Whence is it, that we ſee *Genius* and *natural Abilities* to be equally pleaſed with, and equally contending for the Errors and Abſurdities of every Syſtem of Religion under which they are educated? It is becauſe Genius and Natural Abilities are juſt the *ſame Things*, and muſt have the ſame Nature *now*, as they had in the antient Schools of the *Peripatetic*, *Academic*, *Stoic*, and *Atheiſtic* Philoſophers.—" The Temptation of *Ho-*
" *nour*, which the Academic Exerciſe of
" Wit

" Wit (as Dr W. says) was supposed to " bring to its Professor*," has still its Power among Church Disputants. Nor can it possibly ever be otherwise, till *Parts* and *Genius* &c. do, as the *Blind*, the *Deaf*, the *Dumb*, and *Lepers* formerly did, go to be healed of their *natural* Disorders by the Inspiration of that Oracle, who said, *I am the Light of the World, He that followeth me, walketh not in Darkness.*——*No Man cometh unto the Father but by me.*——Well therefore might St *Paul* say, *I have determined to know Nothing among you, but Christ, and him crucified.*——And had it not been for this Determination, he had never known, what he then knew, when he said, *The Life that I now live, is not mine, but Christ's that liveth in me.*——Now did the Apostle here overstretch the Matter? Was it a Spirit of *Enthusiasm*, and not of Christ *living* in him, that made this Declaration? Was He here making Way for Ignorance and Darkness to extinguish the Light that came down from Heaven, and was the Light of the World?—— Did he here undermine the true Ground and Rock on which the Church of Christ was to stand, and prevail against the Gates of Hell? Did he by setting up this Knowledge, as the *best* and *only* Know-

* Divine Legation of Moses, Book I. pag. 33.

ledge that an apoſtle need to have, break down the Fences of Chriſt's Vineyard, rob the Church of all its ſtrong Holds, leave it defenceleſs, without a Pale, and a ready Prey to Infidels?——Who can ſay this, but that *Spirit of Antichriſt that confeſſeth not that Jeſus Chriſt is come in the Fleſh?* For as Chriſt's intending Nothing, knowing Nothing, willing Nothing, but purely and ſolely *the whole Courſe* of his crucifying Proceſs, was the whole Truth of his *being come in the Fleſh*, was his doing the *whole* Will of him that ſent him, was his *overcoming* the World, Death, and Hell; ſo He that embraces this Proceſs as Chriſt embraces it, who is wholly given up to it as Chriſt was, He has the *Will* of Chriſt, and the *Mind* of Chriſt, and therefore may well deſire to know Nothing elſe.——To this Man alone is the World, Death, and Hell known to be overcome in him, as they were in Chriſt; to him alone is Chriſt become the *Reſurrection* and the *Life*; and he that knows this, he knows with St *Paul* that all other Knowledge may, and will be caſt away as Dung.—Now if St *Paul*, having rejected all other Knowledge but that of a crucified Saviour, which to the *Jew* was a Stumbling-Block, and to the *Greek* Fooliſhneſs, if he had afterwards wrote three ſuch *Legation-Volumes* as the Doctor has done, for the Food and Nouriſhment

of

of Christ's Sheep, who can have no Life in them but by eating the true Bread that came down from Heaven, must they not have been called *Paul*'s full Recantation of all that he had taught of a Christ crucified?

The other Instance of Delusion from Book-learning relates to Mr *Green*, who wanting to write on *divine Inspiration*, runs from Book to Book, from Country to Country, to *pick up Reports* where-ever he could find them concerning divine Inspiration, from this and that *judicious* Author, that so he might be sure of compiling a *Judicious* Dissertation on the Subject. All which he might have known to be mere Delusion and lost Labour, had he but remembered, or regarded any one single Saying either of Christ or his Apostles concerning the *holy Spirit* and *his Operations*. For not a Word is said by them, but fully shews that all *Knowledge* or Perception of the Spirit is nothing else but the *Enjoyment* of the Spirit, and that no Man can know more of him than that which the Spirit himself is, and does, and manifests of his Power in Man.

The Things of God, says St *Paul, knoweth no Man, but the Spirit of God.* Is not this decisive upon the Matter? Is not this Proof enough, that Nothing in Man, but the Spirit of God in him, can know what the Spirit's work in Man is and does? The Fruits of the

the Spirit, ſo often mentioned in Scripture, are not Things different, or ſeparate from the Spirit; and if the Spirit is not always working in us, his Fruits muſt be as abſent from us as He is. St *John* ſays, *Hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us.* A Demonſtration, that the Spirit can no other way make himſelf *known* to us, but by his dwelling and working in us. St *James* ſays, *Every good and perfect Gift cometh from* ABOVE: But now does not he in reality *deny* this, who ſeeks for the *higheſt Gift* of Knowledge from BELOW, from the poor Contrivance of a *Common-Place* Book? Again, if *any Man lacketh Wiſdom, let him aſk it of God*; St *James* does not ſay, let him go aſk *Peter*, or *Paul*, or *John*, becauſe he knew that divine Wiſdom was Nothing elſe but divine Inſpiration.——But Mr *Green* has got together his *ingenious*, his *eminent* Writers, his *excellent*, *learned*, *judicious* Authors, his *cool*, *rational-morality* Doctors (a Set of Men whoſe glorious Names we read no more of in the Goſpel, than of the profound *Ariſtotle*, or the divine *Cicero*) and theſe are to do that from him, which the whole College of Apoſtles could do for no Body.—Now this Doctrine, that Nothing but the Spirit can know the Things that be of God, and that the *Enjoyment* of the Spirit is all the Knowledge we can have of him, is a Truth taught us, not only by all Scrip-

ture, but by the whole Nature of Things. For every Thing that can be ſeen, known, heard, felt, &c. muſt be manifeſted by itſelf, and not by another. It is not poſſible for any Thing but Light to manifeſt Light, nor for any Thing but Darkneſs to make Darkneſs to be known. Yet this is more poſſible, than for any Thing but divine Inſpiration to make divine Inſpiration to be known. Hence there is a Degree of Deluſion ſtill higher to be noted in ſuch Writers as Mr *Green*; for his Collection of ingenious, eminent, rational Authors, of whom he aſks Counſel concerning the Neceſſity or Certainty of the immediate Inſpiration of the Spirit, are ſuch as deny it, and write againſt it. Therefore the Proceeding is juſt as wiſe, as if a Man was to conſult ſome ingenious and eminent *Atheiſts*, about the Truth and Certainty of God's immediate continual Providence; or aſk a few ſelect *Deiſts*, how, or what he was to believe of the Nature and Power of Goſpel Faith. Now there are the holy Spirit's *own Operations*, and there are *Reports* about them. The only true Reports, are thoſe that are made by inſpired Perſons; and if there were no ſuch Perſons, there could be no true Reports of the Matter. And therefore to conſult uninſpired Perſons, and ſuch as deny and reproach the Pretence to Inſpiration, to be rightly inſtructed about the

Truth

Truth of immediate continual divine Inſpiration, is a Degree of Blindneſs greater than can be charged upon the old Jewiſh Scribes and Phariſees.

The Reports that are to be acknowledged as true concerning the holy Spirit and his Operations, are thoſe that are recorded in Scripture; that is, the Scriptures are an infallible Hiſtory, or Relation of that which the holy Spirit is, and does, and works in true Believers; and alſo an infallible Direction how we are to ſeek, and wait, and truſt in his good Power over us. But then the Scriptures themſelves, though thus true and infallible in theſe Reports and Inſtructions about the holy Spirit, yet they can go no farther than to be a true Hiſtory; they cannot give to the Reader of them the *Poſſeſſion*, the *Senſibility*, and *Enjoyment* of that which they relate. This is plain, not only from the Nature of a written Hiſtory or Inſtruction, but from the expreſs Words of our Lord, ſaying, *Except a Man be born again of the Spirit, He cannot ſee or enter into the Kingdom of God.* Therefore the *new Birth* from above, or of the Spirit, is that alone which gives true knowledge and Perception of that which is the Kingdom of God. The Hiſtory may relate Truths enough about it; but the Kingdom of God, being Nothing elſe but the Power and Preſence

ſence of God dwelling and ruling in our Souls, this can only manifeſt itſelf, and can manifeſt itſelf to Nothiug in Man but to the New Birth. For every Thing elſe in Man is deaf and dumb and blind to the Kingdom of God; but when that which dyed in Adam is made alive again by the quickening Spirit from above, this being the Birth which came at firſt from God, and a Partaker of the divine Nature, this knows, finds, and enjoys the Kingdom of God.

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, ſays Chriſt: This Record of Scripture is true; but what a Deluſion, for a Man to think that he knows and finds this to be true, and that Chriſt is all this Benefit and Bleſſing to him, becauſe he aſſents, conſents, and contends, it may be, for the Truth of thoſe Words. This is impoſſible. The *new Birth* is here again the Only Power of Entrance; every Thing elſe knocks at the Door in vain: I know you not ſays Chriſt to *every Thing*, but the New Birth.——*I am the way, the Truth and the Life*; this tells us neither more nor leſs, than if Chriſt had ſaid, *I am the Kingdom of God*, into which Nothing can enter, but that which is born of the Spirit.

Here again may be ſeen, in the higheſt Degree of certainty, the *abſolute Neceſſity* of immediate divine Inſpiration through every Part of the Chriſtian Life. For if a Birth

of the Spirit is that alone that can enter into, or receive the Kingdom of God come amongſt Men, that alone which can find Chriſt to be the Way, the Truth, and the Life, then a *Continual Life*, or Breathing of the Spirit in us, muſt be as Neceſſary as the firſt Birth of the Spirit. For a Birth of the Spirit is only to make a Beginning of a *Life* of the Spirit: *Birth* is only in order to *Life*; if therefore the *Life* of the Spirit continues not, the *Birth* is loſt, and the Ceſſation of its Breathing in us is nothing elſe but *Death* again to the Kingdom of God, that is, to every Thing that is or can be Godly. Therefore the *immediate continual* Inſpiration of the Spirit, as the only poſſible Power and Preſervation of a Godly Life, ſtands upon the ſame Ground, and is as abſolute neceſſary to Salvation, as the new Birth.

Take away this Power and working Life of the Spirit from being the *one Life* of all that is done in the Church, and then, though it be ever ſo outwardly glorious in its Extent, or ever ſo full of learned Members, it can be Nothing elſe in the ſight of God but the wiſe *Greeks* and the carnal *Jews* become a Body of water-baptized Chriſtians. For no one can be in a better State than this; the Wiſdom of the *Greek*, the Carnality of the *Jew*, muſt have the whole Government of him,

him, till he is born of and led by the Spirit of God; this alone is the Kingdom of God, and every Thing elſe is the Kingdom of this World, in which Satan is declared to be the Prince.—Poor, miſerable Man! that ſtrives, with all the Sophiſtry of human Wit, to be delivered from the immediate continual Operation and Government of the Spirit of God, not conſidering, that where God is not, *there* is the devil, and where the Spirit rules not, *there* all is the Work of the Fleſh, though nothing be talked of but Spiritual and Chriſtian Matters. I ſay *talked of*; for the beſt Ability of the natural Man can go no farther than *Talk*, and *Notions*, and *Opinions* about Scripture Words and Facts; in theſe, he may be a great *Critic*, an acute *Logician*, a powerful *Orator*, and know every Thing of Scripture, except the *Spirit* and the *Truth*.

How much then it is to be lamented, as well as impoſſible to be denied, that though all Scripture aſſures us, that *the Things of the Spirit* of God are and muſt, to the end of the World, be *Fooliſhneſs to the natural* Man, yet from one end of learned Chriſtendom to the other, nothing is thought of, as the true and proper means of attaining divine Knowledge, but that which every *natural*, *ſelfiſh*, *proud*, *envious*, *falſe*, *vain-glorious*, worldly Man can do. Where is that Divinity Student who thinks, or was ever taught to think, of partaking

partaking of the Light of the Gospel any other Way, than by doing with the Scriptures that which he does with Pagan Writers, whether Poets, Orators, or Comedians, viz. exercise his Logic, Rhetoric, and critical skill in descanting upon them? This done, he is thought by himself, and often by others, to have a sufficiency of divine apostolical Knowledge. What Wonder therefore if it should sometimes happen, that the very same vain, corrupt, puffing Literature, that raises one Man to be a *Poet-Laureat*, should set another in a divinity Chair?

How is it that the logical, critical, learned Deist comes by his Infidelity? Why just by the same Help of the same good Powers of the *Natural Man*, as many a learned Christian comes to know, embrace, and contend for the Faith of the Gospel. For, drop the Power and Reality of divine Inspiration, and then all is dropt that can set the Believer above, or give him any Godly Difference from the Infidel. For the Christian's Faith has no Goodness in it, but that it comes from *above*, is born *of the Spirit*; and the Deist's Infidelity has no Badness in it, but because it comes *from below*, is born of the Will of Flesh, and of the will of Men, and rejects the Necessity of being born again out of the Corruption of fallen Nature. The Christian therefore that rejects, reproaches, and writes against

againſt the Neceſſity of immediate divine Inſpiration, pleads the whole cauſe of Infidelity; he confirms the Ground on which it ſtands; and has Nothing to prove the Goodneſs of his own Chriſtianity, but that which equally proves to the Deiſt the Goodneſs of his Infidelity. For without the New Birth, or which is the ſame Thing, without immediate continual divine Inſpiration, the Difference between the Chriſtian and the Infidel is quite loſt; and whether the uninſpired unregenerate Son of Adam be in the Church, or out of the Church, he is ſtill that Child of this World, *that* fallen Adam, and mere natural Man, to whom the *Things of the Spirit of* God are and muſt be Fooliſhneſs. For a full Proof of this no more need be ſeen, than that which you cannot help ſeeing, that the ſame ſhining *Virtues*, and the ſame glaring *Vices* are common to them both. For the Chriſtian, not made ſuch by the Spirit of God continually inſpiring and working in him, has only a Chriſtianity of his own making, and *can* have only ſuch *Appearances* of Virtues, and *will* have ſuch *Reality* of Vices, as *natural Self* wants to have. Let him therefore renounce what is called *natural Religion* as much as he will, yet unleſs he is a new born and divinely inſpired Chriſtian, he muſt live and die in all his *natural Corruption*.

Through all Scripture nothing elſe is aimed at or intended for Man, as his Chriſtianity, but the divine Life, nor any Thing hinted at, as having the leaſt Power to raiſe or beget it, but the holy Life-giving Spirit of God. —— How groſs therefore is that Blindneſs, which reading the Goſpel, and the Hiſtory of Goſpel Chriſtians, cannot ſee theſe two fundamental Truths, (1.) *That Nothing is divine Knowledge in Man but the divine Life:* (2) *That the divine Life is Nothing elſe but a Birth of the divine Nature within him?*

But this Truth being loſt or given up, vain Learning and a worldly Spirit, being in Poſſeſſion of the *Goſpel-Book*, ſet up Kingdoms of *Strife* and *Diviſion*.——For what End? Why, that the *Unity* of the Church may not be loſt. Multiply Syſtems of empty Notions and Opinions: For what? Why, that Words and Forms may do *that* for the Church *now*, which to the firſt Church, of Chriſt's own forming, could only be done by being *born of the Spirit*.

Hence it is, that the Scripture-Scholar is looked upon as having *divine Knowledge* of its Matters, when he is as ready at Chapter and Verſe, as the Critic is at every Page of *Cicero*. And nothing is looked upon as defective in Divinity Knowledge, but ſuch ſuppoſed Miſtakes of the Genius of the Hebrew,

brew, or Greek Letter, as the ſublime Students of the *immortal* Words of a *Milton*, or a *Shakeſpeare*, charge as *Blunders* upon one another.

Now to call ſuch Scripture Skill *divine Knowledge*, is juſt as ſolid and judicious, as if a Man was ſaid or thought to *know* that which St *John knew*, becauſe he could ſay his whole *Goſpel* and *Epiſtles* by Heart, without miſſing a Word of them. For a literal Knowledge of Scripture is but like having all Scripture in the Memory, and is ſo far from being a *divine Preception* of the Things ſpoken of, that the moſt vicious wicked Scholar in the World may attain to the higheſt Perfection in it. But divine Knowledge and Wickedneſs of Life are ſo inconſiſtent, that they are mutual Death and Deſtruction to one another; where the one is alive, the other muſt be dead.——*Judas Iſcariot* knew Jeſus Chriſt, and all that he ſaid and did, to his Crucifixion; he knew what it was to be at the Lord's Table, and to partake of his Supper of Bread and Wine. But yet, with much more Truth it may be ſaid, that he knew nothing of all this, and had no better a Knowledge of it than *Pontius Pilate* had. Now all Knowledge of Chriſt, but that which is from divine Inſpiration, or the New-Birth, is but as poor and profitleſs as the Knowledge of *Judas* was.

It may say to Christ, as he did, *Hail Master*; but no one *can call Jesus Lord, but by the holy Spirit.*—— This empty Letter-learned Knowledge, which the natural Man can as easily have of the Sacred Scripture and Religious Matters, as of any other Books or human Affairs, this being taken for *divine Knowledge*, has spread such Darkness and Delusion all over Christendom, as may be reckoned no less than a general Apostasy from the gospel State of *divine Illumination*. For the gospel State is in its whole Nature nothing else; it has but one Light, and that is the *Lamb of God*; it has but one Life, and that is by the Spirit of God. Whatever is not of and from this Light, and governed by this Spirit, call it by what high Name you will, is no more a Part of the gospel State, nor will have a better End, than that which *entereth into the Mouth*, and *corrupteth in the Belly*.

That one Light and Spirit, which was only one from all Eternity, before Angels or any heavenly Beings were created, must to all Eternity be that one only Light and Spirit, by which Angels or Men can ever have any Union or Communion with God. ——Every other Light is but the Light whence Beasts have their Sense and Subtilty; every other Spirit, is but that which gives to Flesh and Blood all its Lusts and Appetites.

—Nothing

——Nothing elſe but the Loſs of the one Light and Spirit of God turned an Order of Angels into Devils.——Nothing elſe but the Loſs of that ſame Light and Spirit took from the divine Adam his firſt Crown of paradiſical Glory, ſtript him more naked than the Beaſts, and left him a Prey to Devils, and in the Jaws of eternal Death.——What therefore can have the leaſt Share of Power towards Man's Redemption, but the Light and Spirit of God making again a Birth of themſelves in Him, as they did in his firſt glorious Creation? Or what can poſſibly begin, or being forth this Return of his firſt loſt Birth, but ſolely that which is done by this eternal Light and Spirit.——Hence it is, that the goſpel State is by our Lord affirmed to *be a Kingdom of Heaven at Hand, or come among Men*, becauſe it has the Nature of no worldly Thing or creaturely Power, is to ſerve no worldly Ends, can be helped by no worldly Power, receives nothing from Man but Man's full denial of himſelf, ſtands upon nothing that is finite or tranſitory, has no Exiſtence but in that working Power of God that created and upholds Heaven and Earth, and is a Kingdom of God become Man, and a Kingdom of Men united to God, through a continual immediate divine Illumination. What Scripture of the New Teſtament can you read, that

does not prove this to be the gospel State, a Kingdom of God, into which none can enter but by being born of the Spirit, none can continue to be alive in it but by being led by the Spirit, and in which not a Thought, or Desire, or Action can be allowed to have any Part, but as it is a Fruit of the Spirit?

Thy Kingdom come, thy Will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. What is God's Kingdom in Heaven, but the Manifestation of what God is, and what He does in his heavenly Creatures? How is his Will done there, but because his holy Spirit is the Life, the Power, and Mover of all that live in it.—— We daily read this Prayer, we extol it under the Name of the Lord's Prayer, and yet (for the Sake of Orthodoxy) preach and write against all that is prayed for in it. For nothing but a continual, essential, immediate divine Illumination can do that which we pray may be done.

For where can God's Kingdom be come, but where every other Power but his is at an End, and driven out of it? How can his Will only be done, but where the *Spirit* that wills in God *wills* in the Creature?

What now have Parts, and Literature, and the natural Abilities of Man, that they can do here? Just as much as they can do at the Resurrection of the Dead; for all that

is

is to be done here is nothing elſe but *Reſurrection* and *Life*. Therefore, that which gave Eyes to the Blind, cleanſed the Lepers, caſt out Devils, and raiſed the Dead, that alone can and muſt do all that is to be done in this Goſpel Kingdom of God. For every the ſmalleſt *Work* or *Fruit* of Grace muſt be as ſolely done by God, as the *greateſt Miracle* in Nature; and the Reaſon is, becauſe every Work of Grace is the ſame overcoming of Nature, as when the Dead are raiſed to Life.——Yet vain Man would be thought to be *ſomething*, to have great Power and Ability in this Kingdom of Grace, not becauſe he happens to be born of noble Parents, is cloathed in Purple and fine Linen, and fares ſumptuouſly every Day, but becauſe he has happened to be made a Scholar, has run through all Languages and Hiſtories, has been long exerciſed in Conjectures and Criticiſms, and has his Head as full of all Notions, theological, poetical, and philoſophical, as a Dictionary is full of all Sorts of Words.

Now let this ſimple Queſtion decide the whole Matter here: Has this great Scholar any more Power of *ſaying to this Mountain, Be thou removed hence, and caſt into the Sea*, than the illiterate Chriſtian has? If not, he is juſt as weak, as powerleſs, and little in the Kingdom of God as he is. But if

the illiterate Man's Faith ſhould happen to be nearer to the *Bulk* of a Grain of Muſtard-Seed, than that of the *prodigious Scholar*, the illiterate Chriſtian ſtands much above him in the Kingdom of God.

Look now at the preſent State of Chriſtendom, glorying in the Light of Greek and Roman Learning (which an Age or two ago broke forth) as a *Light* that has helped the Goſpel to ſhine with a Luſtre, that it ſcarce ever had before. Look at this, and you will ſee the *Fall* of the preſent Church from its firſt Goſpel State, to have much Likeneſs to the *Fall* of the firſt *divine* Man from the Glory of paradifical Innocence, and heavenly Purity into an earthly State, and beaſtial Life of worldly Craft and ſerpentine Subtilty.

In the firſt Goſpel Church, heathen Light had no other Name than heathen Darkneſs; and the Wiſdom of Words was no more ſought after, than that *Friendſhip* of the World which is *Enmity* with God. In that new born Church, the *Tree of Life, which grew in the Midſt of Paradiſe*, took Root and grew up again.——In the preſent Church, the *Tree of Life* is hiſſed at, as the viſionary Food of deluded Enthuſiaſts; and the Tree of *Death*, called the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, has the Eyes and Hearts of Prieſt and People, and is thought

to

to do as much Good to Chriſtians, as it did Evil to the firſt Inhabitants of Paradiſe.—This Tree, that brought Death and Corruption into human Nature at firſt, is now called a Tree of *Light*, and is Day and Night well watered with every corrupt Stream, however diſtant, or muddy with Earth, that can be drawn to it.

The Simplicity indeed, both of the Goſpel Letter and Doctrine, has the Shine and Poliſh of claſſic Literature laid thick upon it.——*Cicero* is in the Pulpit, *Ariſtotle* writes Chriſtian Ethics, *Eucild* demonſtrates Infidelity and Abſurdity to be the ſame Thing.—*Greece* had but one *Longinus*, *Rome* had but one *Quintilian*; but in our preſent Church they are as *common* as Patriots in the State.

But now, what follows from this new riſen Light? Why, *Ariſtotle*'s Atheiſm, *Cicero*'s Height of Pride and Depth of Diſſimulation, and every refined or groſs Species of *Greek* or *Roman* Vices, are as glaring in this new enlightened Chriſtian Church, as ever they were in old Pagan *Greece* or *Rome*.——Would you find a *Goſpel-Chriſtian* in all this *Mid-day Glory* of Learning, you may light a Candle, as the Philoſopher did in the Mid-day Sun to find an honeſt Man.

And indeed, if we conſider the Nature of our Salvation, either with Reſpect to *That* which

which alone can ſave us, or *That* from which we are to be ſaved, it will be plain that the Wit and Elegance of claſſic Literature, brought into a Chriſtian Church to make the Doctrines of the Croſs have a better *Salvation-Effect* upon fallen Man, is but like calling in the Aſſiſtance of *Balls* and *Maſquerades*, to make the *Lent-Penitence* go deeper into the Heart, and more effectually drive all Levity and Impurity out of it.—— How poorly was the Goſpel at firſt preached, if the Wiſdom of Words, and the Gifts of natural Wit and Imagination had been its genuine Helps? But alas, they ſtand in the ſame Contrariety to one another, as Self-denial and Self-gratification. To know the Truth of Goſpel Salvation, is to know that Man's natural *Wiſdom* is to be equally ſacrificed with his naturally *Folly*; for they are but one and the ſame Thing, only called ſometimes by one Name, and ſometimes by the other.

His intellectual Faculties are, by the *Fall*, in a much worſe State than his natural animal Appetities, and want a much greater Self-denial. And when own *Will*, own *Underſtanding*, and own *Imagination* have their natural Strength indulged and gratified, and are made ſeemingly rich and honourable with the Treaſures acquired from a Study of the *Belles Lettres*, they will juſt as much help poor fallen Men to be *like-minded* with Chriſt,

Chriſt, as the *Art* of *Cookery*, well and daily ſtudied, will help a Profeſſor of the Goſpel to the Spirit and Practice of Chriſtian Abſtinence.——To know all this to be ſtrictly the Truth, no more need be known than theſe two Things: (1.) That our Salvation conſiſts wholly in being ſaved from *ourſelves*, or that which we are by Nature: (2.) That in the whole Nature of Things, nothing could be *this Salvation*, or Saviour to us, but ſuch an *Humility of God* manifeſted in human Nature as is beyond all Expreſſion. ——Hence, the firſt unalterable Term of this Saviour to fallen Man, is this, *Except a Man denies himſelf, forſakes all that he has, yea and his own Life, he cannot be my Diſciple.* And to ſhew, that this is but the Beginning, or Ground of Man's Salvation, the Saviour adds, *Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of Heart.* What a Light is here for thoſe that can bear, or love the Light! *Self* is the whole Evil of fallen Nature; Self-denial is our *Capacity* of being ſaved; Humility is our *Saviour.* This is every Man's ſhort Leſſon of Life; and he that has well learnt it, is Scholar enough, and has had all the Benefit of a moſt finiſhed Education. Then old Adam with all his Ignorance is caſt out of him; and when Chriſt's Humility is learnt, then he has the very Mind of Chriſt, and

and that which brings him forth a Son of God.

Who then can enough wonder at that Bulk of Libraries, which has taken Place of this ſhort Leſſon of the Goſpel, or at that Number of Champion Diſputants, who from Age to Age have been all in Arms to ſupport and defend a Set of Opinions, Doctrines, and Practices, *all which* may be moſt *cordially* embraced, without the *leaſt degree* of Self-denial, and moſt firmly held faſt, without getting *the leaſt Degree* of Humility by it?

What a Groſſneſs of Ignorance, both of Man and his Saviour, to run to Greek and Roman Schools to learn how to put off Adam, and to put on Chriſt? To drink at the Fountains of Pagan Poets and Orators, in order more divinely to drink of the Cup that Chriſt drank of?——What can come of all this, but that which is already too much come, a *Ciceronian*-Goſpeller, in Stead of a Goſpel-*Penitent?* In Stead of the Depth, the Truth and Spirit of the *humble Publican*, ſeeking to regain *Paradiſe*, only by a broken Heart, crying. *God, be merciful to me a Sinner!* the *high-bred Claſſic* will live in daily Tranſports at the *enormous* * *Sublime* of

* See Milton's *enormous Bliſs.*

of *a Milton*, flying thither on the unfeathered Wings of high ſounding Words.

This will be more or leſs the Caſe with all the Salvation-Doctrines of Chriſt, whilſt under Claſſical Acquiſition and Adminiſtration. Thoſe divine Truths, which are no further good and redeeming, but as they are Spirit and Life in us, which can have no Entrance, or Birth, but in the Death of Self, in a broken and contrite Heart, will ſerve only to help *claſſic Paniters* (as Dr W.* calls them) to laviſh out their Colours on their own Paper Monuments of Liſeleſs Virtues.

How came the learned Heathens by their Pride and Vanity, by their Inability to come under the Humility of the Croſs? It was becauſe the *natural Man* ſhined in the falſe Glory of his own cultivated Abilities. Have Wit and Parts, an elegant Taſte, any more good or *redeeming* Virtue in Chriſtians, than they had in Heathens? As well might it be ſaid, that *own will* is good, and has a *redeeming Virtue* in a Chriſtian, but bad and deſtructive in a Heathen. I ſaid a *redeeming*

* As this Addreſs was wrote ſome time ago, in which are certain Strictures upon Dr *Warburton*'s Writings, who has lately been conſecrated a Right Reverend Lord Biſhop; I thought it more candid not to alter my Stile, than to take the Advantage of charging ſuch groſs Errors on a Biſhop of *Glouceſter*, which I only found in a Mr and Dr *Warburton*.

redeeming Virtue in it; becauſe nothing is or can be a *religious* Good to fallen Man, but that which has a *redeeming Virtue* in it, or is, ſo far as it goes, a true Renewal of the divine Life in the Soul. Therefore ſaid our only Redeemer, *Without me ye can do nothing.* Whatever is not his immediate Work in us, is at beſt but a *mere Nothing* with Reſpect to the Good of our Redemption.—A Tower of *Babel* may to it's Builders Eyes ſeem to hide its Head in the Clouds, but as to its reaching of Heaven, it is no nearer to that, than the Earth on which it ſtands.——It is thus with all the Buildings of Man's Wiſdom and natural Abilities in the Things of Salvation; he may take the Logic of *Ariſtotle*, add to that the Rhetoric of *Tully*, and then aſcend as high as he can on the Ladder of *Poetic* Imagination, yet no more is done to the reviving the loſt Life of God in his Soul, than by a Tower of *Brick* and *Mortar* to reach Heaven.

Self is the Root, the Tree, and the Branches of all the Evils of our fallen State. We are *without* God, becauſe we are *in* the Life of *Self.*—*Self-love*, *Self-eſteem*, and *Self-ſeeking* are the very Eſſence, and Life of Pride; and the Devil the firſt Father of *Pride* is never abſent from them, nor without Power in them.——To die to theſe eſſential Properties of Self is to make the Devil

depart from us. But as ſoon as we would have Self-Abilities have *a Share* in our good Works, the Satanic Spirit of Pride is in Union with us, and we are working for the Maintenance of Self-love, Self-eſteem, and Self-ſeeking.

All the Vices of fallen Angels and Men have their Birth and Power in the Pride of *Self*, or I may better ſay, in the *Atheiſm* and *Idolatry* of Self; for Self is both Atheiſt and Idolater. It is Atheiſt, becauſe it has rejected God; it is an Idolater, becauſe it is its own Idol.——On the other Hand, all the Virtues of the heavenly Life are the Virtues of *Humility*. Not a Joy, or Glory, or Praiſe in Heaven, but is what it is through Humility. It is Humility alone that makes the unpaſſable Gulph between Heaven and Hell. ——No Angels in Heaven, but becauſe Humility is in all their Breath; no Devils in Hell, but becauſe the Fire of Pride is their whole Fire of Life.

What is then, or in what lies the great Struggle for Eternal Life? It all lies in the Strife between PRIDE and HUMILITY: All other Things, be they what they will, are but as under Workmen; Pride and Humility are the two Maſter Powers, the two Kingdoms in Strife for the Eternal Poſſeſſion of Man.

And here it is to be obſerved, that *every Son of Adam* is in the Service of *Pride and Self*, be he doing what he will, till an *Humility* that comes ſolely *from Heaven* has been his *Redeemer*. Till then, all that he doth will be only done by the *right Hand*, that the *left Hand* may know it. And he that thinks it poſſible for the *natural* Man to get a better Humility than this from his own *right Reaſon* (as it is often miſcalled) refined by Education, ſhews himſelf quite Ignorant of this one moſt plain and capital Truth of the Goſpel, *namely*, That there never was, nor ever will be but *one Humility* in the whole World, and that is the *one Humility* of Chriſt, which never any Man, ſince the fall of Adam, had the leaſt Degree of but from Chriſt.——*Humility* is one, in the ſame Senſe and Truth, as *Chriſt* is one, the *Mediator* is one, *Redemption* is one. There are not *two Lambs of God that take away the Sins of the World.* But if there was any Humility beſides that of Chriſt, there would be ſomething elſe beſides him that could take away the Sins of the World.——*All that come before me*, ſays Chriſt, *were Thieves and Robbers:* We are uſed to confine this to Perſons; but the ſame is as true of every Virtue, whether it has the Name of Humility, Charity, Piety, or any Thing elſe; if it comes before Chriſt, however good it may pretend

pretend to be, it is but a Cheat, a Thief, and a Robber, under the Name of a Godly Virtue. And the Reaſon is, becauſe *Pride and Self* have the *all* of Man, till Man has *his all* from Chriſt. He therefore only fights the good Fight, whoſe Strife is that the *Self-Idolatrous* Nature which he hath from *Adam* may be brought to Death, by the *ſupernatural* Humility of Chriſt brought to Life in him.

The Enemies to Man's riſing out of the Fall of Adam, through the Spirit and Power of Chriſt, are many. But the one great Dragon-Enemy, called *Antichriſt*, is SELF-EXALTATION. This is his Birth, his Pomp, his Power, and his Throne; when Self-Exaltation ceaſes, the laſt Enemy is deſtroyed, and all that came from the *Pride and Death* of Adam is ſwallowed up in Victory.

There has been much ſharp looking out, to ſee *where* and *what* Antichriſt is, or by what Marks he may be known. Some ſay he has been in the Chriſtian World almoſt ever ſince the Goſpel Times, nay, that he was even then beginning to appear and ſhew himſelf. Others ſay he came in with this, or that *Pope*; others that he is not yet come, but near at Hand. Others will have it, that he has been here and there, but driven from one Place to another by ſeveral new riſen Proteſtant Sects.

But to know with certainty, *where* and *what* Antichriſt is, and who is with him, and who againſt him, you need only read this ſhort Deſcription which Chriſt gives of himſelf. (1.) *I can do nothing of myſelf.* (2.) *I came not to do my own Will.* (3.) *I ſeek not my own Glory.* (4.) *I am meek and lowly of Heart.*——Now if this is Chriſt, then *Self-Ability or Self-Exaltation,* being the higheſt and fulleſt Contrariety to all this, muſt be alone the *one great Antichriſt,* that oppoſes and withſtands the whole Nature and Spirit of Chriſt.

What therefore has every one ſo much to fear, to renounce and abhor, as every *inward* Senſibility of Self-Exaltation, and every *outward* Work that proceeds from it.—— But now, at what Things ſhall a Man look, to ſee *that working* of Self which raiſes Pride to its ſtrongeſt Life, and moſt of all hinders the Birth of the humble Jeſus in his Soul? Shall he call the *Pomps* and *Vanities* of the World the higheſt Works of *Self-Adoration?* Shall he look at *Fops* and *Beaux,* and *painted Ladies,* to ſee the Pride that has the *moſt* of Antichriſt in it? No, by no means. Theſe are indeed Marks, ſhameful enough, of the vain, fooliſh Heart of Man, but yet, comparatively ſpeaking, they are but the Skin-deep Follies of that Pride which the Fall

Fall of Man has begotten and brought forth in him.——Would you ſee the deepeſt Root, and Iron-Strength of Pride and Self-Adoration, you muſt enter into the dark Chamber of Man's fiery Soul, where the Light of God (which alone gives Humility and meek Submiſſion to all created Spirits) being extinguiſhed by the Death which Adam died, *Satan*, or which is the ſame Thing, *Self-Exaltation* became the *Strong Man that* kept Poſſeſſion of the Houſe, till a Stronger than he ſhould come upon him. ——In this ſecret Source of an eternal firey Soul, glorying in the aſtral Light of this World, a ſwelling Kingdom of Pomps and Vanities is ſet up in the Heart of Man, of which all outward Pomps and Vanities are but its childiſh tranſitory Play-things. The inward *Strong Man* of Pride, the *diabolical Self*, has his higher Works *within*; he dwells in the Strength of the Heart, and has every Power and Faculty of the Soul offering continual Incenſe to him. ——His *Memory*, his *Will*, his *Underſtanding*, and *Imagination* are always at work for him, and for no one elſe.——His *Memory* is the faithful Repoſitory of all the fine Things that *Self* has ever done; and leſt any Thing of them ſhould be loſt or forgotten, ſhe is continually ſetting them before his Eyes. His *Will*, though it has all the World before

it, yet goes after Nothing, but as *Self* ſends it. His *Underſtanding* is ever upon the Stretch for new Projects to enlarge the Dominions of Self; and if this fails, *Imagination* comes in, as the laſt and trueſt Support of *Self*, ſhe makes him a King and mighty Lord of *Caſtles in the Air*.

This is that full-born natural Self, that muſt be pulled out of the Heart, and totally denied, or there can be no Diſciple of Chriſt; which is only ſaying this plain Truth, that the apoſtate Self-idolatrous Nature of the old Man muſt be put off, or there can be no new Creature in Chriſt.

Now what is it in the human Soul that moſt of all hinders the Death of this old Man? What is it that above all other Things ſtrengthens and exalts the Life of Self, and makes it the Maſter and Governor of all the Powers of the Heart and Soul? It is the fanſied Riches of *Parts*, the Glitter of *Genius*, the Flights of *Imagination*, the Glory of *Learning*, and the Self-conceited Strength of *natural Reaſon*: Theſe are the *ſtrong Holds* of fallen Nature, the Maſter-Builders of Pride's Temple in the Heart of Man, and which, as ſo many Prieſts, keep up the daily Worſhip of Idol-Self.——And here let it be well, and well obſerved, that all theſe magnified Talents of the natural Man are ſtarted up through his miſerable

Fall

Fall from the Life of God in his Soul.—— *Wit*, *Genius*, *Learning*, and *natural Reaſon*, would never have had any more a Name among Men, than *Blindneſs*, *Ignorance*, and *Sickneſs*, had Man continued, as at Firſt, an holy Image of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. ——Every Thing then that dwelt in him, or came from him, would have only ſaid *ſo much* of God, and *nothing* of Himſelf, have manifeſted nothing to him but the *heavenly Powers* of the Triune Life of God dwelling in him.——He would have had no more Senſe or Conſciouſneſs of his own Wit, or natural Reaſon, or any Power of Goodneſs in all that He was, and did, than of his *own creating Power*, at beholding the created Heavens and Earth.——It is his dreadful Fall from the Life of God in his Soul, that has furniſhed him with theſe high *intellectual* Riches, juſt as it has furniſhed him with the ſubſtantial Riches of his *beſtial Appetites* and *Luſts*. And when the Luſts of the Fleſh have ſpent out their Life, when the dark thick Body of earthly Fleſh and Blood ſhall be forced to let the Soul go looſe, all theſe bright Talents will end with that Syſtem of fleſhly Luſts, in which they begun; and *that* of Man which remains will have nothing *of its own*, nothing that can ſay, *I do this*, or *I do that*; but all that it has or does will be either the *Glory of God* manifeſted in it, or the

Power of Hell in full Poſſeſſion of it.—— The Time of Man's playing with *Parts, Wit, and Abilities*, and of fancying Himſelf to be ſomething *great and conſiderable* in the intellectual World, may be much ſhorter, but can be no longer, than he can eat and drink with the Animals of this World.—— When the Time comes, that fine Buildings, rich Settlements, acquired Honours, and Rabbi, Rabbi, muſt take their Leave of him, all the ſtately Structures, which Genius, Learning, and Flights of Imagination have painted inwardly on his Brain, and outwardly on Paper, muſt bear full Witneſs to *Solomon*'s Vanity of Vanities.

Let then the high accompliſhed Scholar reflect, that he comes by his Wit, and Parts, and acute Abilities, juſt as the *Serpent* came by his Subtilty; let him reflect, that he might as well dream of acquiring angelic Purity to his animal Nature by multiplying new invented Delights for his earthly Paſſions and Tempers, as of raiſing his Soul into divine Knowledge through the *well exerciſed* Powers of his natural Reaſon and Imagination.

The fineſt intellectual Power, and that which has the beſt Help in it towards bringing Man again into the Region of divine Light, is that poor deſpiſed Thing called *Simplicity*. This is that which ſtops the Workings of the fallen

ſallen Life of Nature, and leaves room for God to work again in the Soul, according to the good Pleaſure of his holy Will. It ſtands in ſuch a waiting Poſture before God, and in ſuch Readineſs for the divine Birth, as the Plants of the Earth wait for the inflowing Riches of the Light and Air. But the *Self-aſſuming* Workings of Man's Natural Powers ſhut him up in himſelf, cloſely barred up againſt the inflowing Riches of the Light and Spirit of God.

Yet ſo it is, in this *fallen State* of the Goſpel Church, that with theſe proud Endowments of fallen Nature, the *Claſſic* Scholar, full fraught with Pagan Light and Skill, comes forth to play the *Critic and Orator* with the ſimplicity of Salvation Myſteries; Myſteries which mean nothing elſe but the *inward Work* of the Triune God in the Soul of Man, nor any other Work there, but the raiſing up a *dead Adam* into a *living Chriſt* of God.

However, to make way for *Parts, Crititiſm,* and *Language-Learning* to have the full Management of Salvation Doctrines, the well-read Scholar gives out, that the antient Way of knowing the Things of God, taught and practiſed by *Fiſhermen*-Apoſtles, is obſolete. They indeed wanted to have divine Knowledge from the *immediate continual* Operation of the holy Spirit, but this State was only for a Time, till Genius and Learn-

ing entered into the Pale of the Church. —— Behold, if ever, *the Abomination of Desolation standing in the holy Place!*——For as soon as the Doctrine is set up, that Man's natural Parts and acquired Learning have full Right and Power to sit in the Divinity Chair, and to guide Men into that Truth which was once the only Office and Power of the holy Spirit, as soon as this is done, and so far as it is received, it may with the greatest Truth be said, that *the Kingdom of God* is entirely shut up, and only a Kingdom of Scribes, Pharisees, and Hypocrites can come instead of it. For by this Doctrine the whole Nature and Power of Gospel Religion is much more denied, than by setting up *the Infallibility of the Pope*; for though his Claim to Infallibility is false, yet he claims it from and under the holy Spirit; but the Protestant Scholar has his Divinity Knowledge, his Power in the Kingdom of Truth from himself, his own Logic, and learned Reason.——Christ has no where instituted an infallible Pope; and it is full as certain, that he has no where spoke one single Word, or given the least Power to *Logic*, *Learning*, or the *natural* Powers of Man in his Kingdom. He has never said to them, *Whatsoever ye shall bind on Earth shall be bound in Heaven*; never said to them, *go ye and teach* all Nations, no more than he has ever

ever said to Wolves *go ye, and feed my Sheep.* ——Christ indeed said of Himself, according to the Flesh, *It is expedient for you, that I go away.* But where has he said of himself according to the Spirit, It is also expedient for you that I go away, that your own natural Abilities and learned Reason may have the Guidance of you into all Truth? This is no where said, unless Logic can prove it from these Words, *Without me ye can do nothing*, and, *Lo, I am with you to the end of the World.*

The first and main Doctrine of Christ and his Apostles was, to tell the Jews *that the Kingdom of God was at Hand*, or was *come to them.* Proof enough surely, that their Church was not that Kingdom of God, though by God's Appointment, and under Laws of his own commanding. But why not, when it was thus set up by God? It was because it had human and worldly Things in it, consisted of carnal Ordinances, and had only Types, and Figures, and Shadows of a Kingdom of God that was to come.——*Of this Kingdom*, Christ says, *My Kingdom is not of this World*; and as a Proof of it, he adds, if it was of this World, *then would my Servants fight for me*; which was saying, that it was so different in Kind, and so superior in Nature to this World, that no Sort of worldly Power could either

help, or hinder it. *But of this World,* into which the Kingdom of God was come, the Holy One of God ſays, *In the World ye ſhall have Tribulation, but be of good Comfort, I have overcome the World.* Now how was it that Chriſt's Victory was their Victory? It was becauſe he was in them, and they in Him, *Becauſe I live, ye ſhall live alſo; in that Day ye ſhall know that I am in the Father, and you in me, and I in you.*

This was the *Kingdom of God* come to them, the ſame Kingdom of God in which Adam was born and begun his firſt glorious Life, when the Image and Likeneſs of the holy Trinity had an outward Glory, like that which broke through the Body of Chriſt, when on Mount *Tabor his Face did ſhine as the Sun, and his Raiment was white as the Light.*——To the Children of *this Kingdom* ſays its almighty King, *When they bring you before Magiſtrates and Powers, take no Thought how, or what ye ſhall anſwer, or what ye ſhall ſay unto them, for the Holy Ghoſt ſhall teach you in that ſame Hour what ye ought to ſay. For it is not ye that ſpeak, but the Spirit of your Father that ſpeaketh in you.*

No higher, or other Thing is here ſaid, than in theſe other Words, *Take no Thought, what ye ſhall Eat, or Drink, or where with-all ye ſhall be cloathed, but ſeek firſt the King-dom*

dom of God, and his Righteouſneſs, and all theſe Things ſhall be added unto you. This is the Truth of the Kingdom of God come unto Men, and this is the Birth-right Privilege of all that are living Members of it, to be delivered from their own natural Spirit which they had from Adam, from the Spirit and Wiſdom of this World, and through the whole Courſe of their Lives only to ſay, and do, and be that, which the Spirit of their Father worketh in them.

But now, is not this Kingdom gone away from us, are we not left comfortleſs, if inſtead of this Spirit of our Father ſpeaking, doing, and working every Thing in us and for us, we are left again to our own natural Powers, to run to every *Lo here*, and *Lo there*, to find a Share in that Kingdom of God, which once was, and never can be any Thing elſe but God, the Wiſdom and Power of God manifeſted in our Fleſh? Had it not been as well, nay better for us, to have been ſtill under Types and Figures, ſacrificing Bulls and Goats by divine Appointment, than to be brought under a Religion that muſt be *Spirit* and *Life*, and then left to the jarring Intereſts of the Wiſdom of the *Greek*, and the Carnality of the *Jew*, how to be living Members of it? For where the Spirit of God is not the continual immediate Governor of ſpiritual Things, nothing

thing better can come of it. For the Truth and full Proof of this, no more need be appealed to than all the Libraries and Churches of Chriſtendom for many Ages to this Day.

What is the Difference between Man's *own Righteouſneſs*, and Man's *own Light* in Religion? They are ſtrictly the ſame Thing, do one and the ſame Work, *namely*, keep up and ſtrengthen every Evil, Vanity, and Corruption of fallen Nature. Nothing ſaves a Man from his *own Righteouſneſs*, but that which ſaves and delivers him from his *own Light*.—The *Jew* that was moſt of all ſet againſt the Goſpel, and unable to receive it, was he that truſted in his own Righteouſneſs; this was the rich Man, to whom it was as hard to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, as for a Camel to go through the Eye of a needle.——But the Chriſtian, that truſts in his *own Light*, is the very *Jew* that truſted in its own Righteouſneſs; and all that he gets by the Goſpel is only that which the Phariſee got by the Law, namely, to be further from entering into the Kingdom of God than Publicans and Harlots.—How comes it, that a *Beaſt*, a *ſcarlet Whore*, a *horned Dragon*, and other the moſt horrible Deſcriptions of diabolical Power, have been by the Spirit of God made Deſcriptions of the Chriſtian Church? How comes it, that the Spirit deſcribes the Goſpel-Church

Church as driven into a Wilderneſs;—— the two faithful Witneſſes, *Moſes* and *Jeſus*, as propheſying ſo many Ages in Sackloth, and ſlain in the Streets of ſpiritual *Sodom* and *Egypt?* It is becauſe Man's *own* natural Light, Man's *own* conceited Righteouſneſs, his ſerpentine *Subtilty*, his *Self-love*, his *ſenſual Spirit* and *worldly Power* have ſeized the Myſteries of Salvation that came down from Heaven, and built them up into a Kingdom of envious Strife and Contention, for learned Glory, ſpiritual Merchandiſe, and worldly Power.——This is the Beaſt, the Whore, and Dragon that has governed, and will govern in every private Chriſtian, and publick Church, till, dead to all that is *Self*, they turn to God; not to a God that they have only heard of with their Ears, and their Fathers have told them, but to a God of Life, Light, and Power, found *living and working within them*, as the *eſſential* Life, Light, and Power of their own Lives.——For God is only our God, by a *Birth* of his own divine Nature within us. This, and nothing but this, is our whole *Relation* to, our only *Fellowſhip* with him, our whole *Knowledge* of him, our whole *Power*, of having any Part in the Myſteries of Goſpel-Salvation. Nothing can ſeek the Kingdom of God, or hunger and thirſt after his Righteouſneſs, Nothing can cry *Abba Father*, Nothing can

pray,

pray, Thy Kingdom come, Nothing can ſay of Chriſt, *my Lord, and my God*, but *That* which is born of God, and is the divine Nature itſelf become creaturely in us. Nothing but God in Man can be a *Godly Life* in Man.——Hence is that of the Apoſtle, *The Letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life.* But you will ſay, can this be true of the *ſpiritual divine* Letter of the Goſpel? Can it kill, or give death? Yes, it *kills*, when it is *reſted* in: when it is taken for *divine Power*, and ſuppoſed to have Goodneſs in itſelf; for it then kills the Spirit of God in Man, quenches his holy Fire within us, and is ſet up inſtead of it.——It *gives Death*, when it is built into *Syſtems* of Strife and Contention about *Words*, *Notions* and *Opinions*, and makes the Kingdom of God to conſiſt, not in *Power*, but in *Words*. When it is thus uſed, then of Neceſſity it *kills*, becauſe it keeps from *That* which alone is *Life*, and can give Life.——This then is the Whole of the Matter; all the literal Truths, and Variety of Doctrines and Expreſſions of the *written Word*, have but one Nature, one End, and one Errand, they all ſay Nothing elſe to Man but that *one Thing* which Chriſt ſaid, in theſe Words, *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refreſh you*; juſt the ſame, as when it is ſaid, *Jeſus Chriſt, who is of God made unto us Wiſdom, Righteouſneſs*, and *Sanctification*; this is the only

only Refreſhment from Chriſt. Again, *But ye are waſhed, but ye are cleanſed in the Name of our Lord Jeſus*; juſt the ſame as when it is ſaid, *Except ye abide in me, and I in you*, ye have no Life in you. Again, *By Grace ye are ſaved, by Faith ye are ſaved*, ſay neither more nor leſs than this, *He that eateth my Fleſh, and drinketh my Blood, hath eternal Life*; the ſame as when Chriſt ſays, *Without me ye can do nothing*; the ſame as the Apoſtle ſays, *Yet not I, but Chriſt that liveth in me*; the ſame as *Chriſt in us the Hope of Glory*; *if Chriſt be not in you, ye are Reprobates.*—— Therefore to come to Chriſt, to have our heavy laden fallen Nature refreſhed by him, to be born Spirit of his Spirit, to have his heavenly Fleſh and heavenly Blood made *living in us*, before we put off the beſtial Body and Blood of Death which we have from Adam, is the *one only Thing* taught and meant by all that is ſo variouſly ſaid in the Scriptures of the Merits and Benefits of Chriſt to us.—— It is the SPIRIT, the BODY, the BLOOD of Chriſt *within us* that is our whole *Peace* with God, our whole *Adoption*, our whole *Redemption*, our whole *Juſtification*, our whole *Glorification*; and this is the one Thing ſaid, and meant by that new Birth, of which Chriſt ſays, *Except a Man be born again from above, he cannot enter into the Kingdom*

of

of God. Now, the true Ground why all that is ſaid of Chriſt in ſuch a Variety of Expreſſions has only *one* Meaning, and points only *to one and the ſame* Thing is this, it is becauſe the whole State and Nature of fallen Man wants only *one Thing*, and that one Thing is a *real Birth* of the divine Nature made living again in him, as at the firſt; and then all is done, that can be done by all the Myſteries of the Birth, and whole Proceſs of Chriſt, for our Salvation. All the Law, the Prophets, and the Goſpel are fulfilled, when there is in Chriſt a new Creature, having Life in and from him, as really as the Branch has its Life in and from the Vine.——And when all Scripture is thus underſtood, and all that either Chriſt ſays of himſelf, or his Apoſtles ſay of him, are all heard, or read, only as *one* and the *ſame* Call to come to Chriſt, in Hunger and Thirſt to be filled and bleſſed with his divine Nature made *living within us*; then, and then only, the *Letter kills not*, but as a ſure Guide leads directly to Life.——But *Grammar*, *Logic*, and *Criticiſm*, knowing nothing of Scripture but its Words bring forth nothing but their *own Wiſdom* of Words, and a Religion of Wrangle, Hatred, and Contention about the Meaning of them.

But

But lamentable as this is, the *Letter* of Scripture has been ſo long the uſurped Province of School-Critics, and learned Reaſoners making their Markets of it, that the Difference between literal, notional, and living divine Knowledge, is almoſt quite loſt in the Chriſtian World. So that if any awakened Souls are here or there found among Chriſtians, who think that more muſt be known of God, of Chriſt, and the Powers of the World to come, than every Scholar can know by reading the Letter of Scripture, immediately the Cry of *Enthuſiaſm*, whether they be Prieſts or People, is ſent after them.——A Procedure, which could only have ſome Excuſe, if theſe *Critics* could firſt prove, that the Apoſtle's Text ought to be thus read, *The Spirit killeth, but the Letter giveth Life.*

The true Nature, and full Diſtinction between *literal* and *divine* Knowledge, is ſet forth in the higheſt Degree of Clearneſs in theſe Words of our Saviour, *The Kingdom of God is like a Treaſure in a Field:* Thus far is the true Uſe and Benefit, and utmoſt Power of the *Letter*, it can tell us of a Treaſure that we want, a Treaſure that belongs to us, and how and where it is to be found; but when it is added, that a *Man goes* and *ſells all that he has*, and *buys that Field*, then begins the *divine*

Knowledge, which is nothing elſe but the Treaſure *poſſeſſed* and *enjoyed*. Now what is here ſaid, is the ſame that is ſaid in theſe other Words of Chriſt, *Except* a *Man denies himſelf and forſakes all that he hath, he cannot be my Diſciple*; that is, he cannot partake of my *Mind*, my *Spirit*, and my *Nature*, and therefore cannot know Me; he is only a Hearer of a Treaſure, without entering into the Poſſeſſion and Enjoyment of it. And thus it is with all Scripture, the *Letter* can only direct to the doing of that which it cannot do, and give Notice of ſomething that it cannot give.

Now clear and evident as this Diſtinction is, between a mere literal Direction to a Thing, and a real Participation of it, which alone is a true Perception of it, the generality of Chriſtians ſeem quite inſenſible of any other religious Perception, or Knowledge of divine Things, but ſuch Ideas or Notions of them as a Man can form from Scripture Words. Whereas *Good and Evil*, the only Objects of religious Knowledge, are an *inward State* and *Growth* of our Life, they are in us, are a Part of us, juſt in the ſame Manner as *ſeeing and hearing* are in us, and we can have no real Knowledge of them any other way, than as we have of our own *ſeeing and hearing*. And as no Man can get or loſe his ſeeing or hearing, or have leſs

or

or more of them, by any *Ideas* or *Notions* that he forms about them, juſt ſo it is with that which is the Power of *Good*, and the Power of *Evil* in us; Notions and Ideas have no effect upon it. Yet no other Knowledge is thought of, or ſought after, or eſteemed of any Value, but that which is notional and the Work of the Brain.

Thus, as ſoon as a Man of Speculation can demonſtrate that which he calls the *Being and Attributes of God*, he thinks, and others think, that he truly *knows* God. But what Excuſe can be made for ſuch an Imagination, when plain Scripture has told him, that *to know God is eternal Life*, that is, to know God is to have the Power, the Life, and the Spirit of God *manifeſted* in him, and therefore it is eternal Life. No Man knoweth the *Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son revealeth him.* Becauſe the *Revelation* of the Son is the *Birth* of the Son in the Soul, and this new Creature in Chriſt has alone *Knowledge* of God, what he is, and does, and works in the Creature.

Again, Another, forming an *Opinion of Faith* from the Letter of Scripture, ſtraightway imagines that he knows what Faith is, and that he is *in the Faith*. Sad Deluſion! For to know what Faith is, or that we are in the Faith, is to know that Chriſt is in us of a Truth; it is to know the Power of his

Life, his Sufferings, his Death, his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion, made good in our Souls. To be in the Faith, is to have done with all *Notions* and *Opinions* about it, becauſe it is found and felt by its living Power and Fruits within us, which are *Righteouſneſs*, *Peace*, and *Joy* in the Holy Ghoſt. All which are three Names or Powers peculiar to Jeſus Chriſt; He alone is our Righteouſneſs, our Peace, our Joy in the Holy Ghoſt. And therefore Faith is not in us by reaſon of this or that Opinion, Aſſent or Conſent, but it is Chriſt, or the divine Nature in us; or its Operations could not be Righteouſneſs, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghoſt.——*By Faith ye are ſaved*, has no other Meaning than By Chriſt ye are ſaved. And if Faith in its whole Nature, in its Root and Growth, was any Thing elſe but Chriſt, or a Birth of the divine Nature within us, it could do us no Good, no Power could be aſcribed to it, it could not be our Victory, it could not overcome the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil.——Every Faith that is not Chriſt in us is but a Dead Faith.

How trifling therefore (to ſay no worſe of it, is that Learning, which ſets up a Difference between *Faith* and its *Works*, between a Juſtification by Faith, and Juſtification by its Works.——Is there any Difference

Difference between Chriſt as a *Redeemer*, and his *redeeming Works?* Can they be ſet above one another in their redeeming Efficacy? If not, then Faith and its Works, which are nothing elſe but Chriſt in us, can have no ſeparation from, or excellency above one another, but are as ſtrictly one, as Chriſt is one, and no more two Things, than our Saviour and our Salvation are two *different* Things in us. Every Thing that is ſaid of Faith, from Adam to this Day, is only ſo much ſaid of the Power, and Life of a one redeeming Chriſt, *working within us*; ſo that to divide Faith from its Works is as abſurd, as to divide a Thing from it's ſelf, a *Circle* from its *Roundneſs*. No Salvation would have ever been aſcribed to Faith, but becauſe it is, in the ſtricteſt Senſe, *Chriſt Himſelf*, the Power of God, *living* and *working* in us. It never would have been ſaid of Faith, that every Power of the World, the Fleſh, and the Devil muſt yield to it, but becauſe it is that very Chriſt within us, *without whom we can do nothing*. But if without Chriſt we can do nothing, and yet *all things are poſſible to our Faith*, can there be a fuller Demonſtration that our Faith is nothing elſe but Chriſt born, and living within us? Whatever therefore there is of Power within us that tends to Salvation, call it by what Name you will, either *Faith*,

or *Hope*, or *Prayer*, or *Hunger* after the Kingdom of God and his Righteouſneſs, it is all but *one Power*, and that one Power is Chriſt *within us*. If therefore Faith and its good Works are but one and the ſame Chriſt *living in us*, the Diſtinction between a good Faith, and its good Works, and all the contentious Volumes that have been written about it, are as mere ignorant Jargon, as a Diſtinction made and contended for between *Life* and its living *Operations*.

When the holy Church of Chriſt, the Kingdom of God come among Men, was firſt ſet up, it was the Apoſtle's Boaſt, that all other Wiſdom or Learning was ſunk into nothing. *Where*, ſays he, *is the Wiſe, the Scribe, the Diſputer of this World? Hath not God made them Fooliſhneſs?* But now, it is the Boaſt of all Churches, that they are full of the *Wiſe*, the *Scribes*, the *Diſputers* of *this* World, who ſit with learned Pomp in the Apoſtles Chair, and have the Myſteries of the Kingdom of God committed to them.

Hence it is, that from a Religion of Heavenly Love, built upon the redeeming Life and Doctrines of a Son of God dying to ſave the whole World, Diviſion, Bitterneſs, Envy, Pride, Strife, Hatred, and Perſecution, nay every Outrage of War and Blood-ſhed, breathe and break forth with more

more Strength in learned Chriſtendom, than ever they did from a Religion of Pagan Idolatry ſet up by Satan.

It may perhaps be here ſaid, Muſt there then be no Learning or Scholarſhip, no recondite Erudition in the Chriſtian Church? Muſt there be nothing thought of, or got by the Goſpel, but *mere Salvation?* Muſt its Miniſters know nothing, teach nothing but ſuch Salvation-Doctrines as Chriſt and his Apoſtles taught; nothing but the *full denial* of Self, Poverty of Spirit, Meekneſs, and Humility, and unwearied Patience, a never ceaſing Love, an abſolute Renunciation of the Pomps and Vanities of the World, a full Dependance upon our Heavenly Father; no Joy or rejoycing but in the Holy Ghoſt; no Wiſdom but that which God gives; no Walking but as Chriſt walked; no Reward or Glory for their Labours of Love, but that of being *found in Chriſt*, Fleſh of his Fleſh, Bone of his Bones, Spirit of his Spirit, and cloathed with the Wedding-Garment when the Bridegroom comes, *when the Lord Himſelf ſhall deſcend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trumpet of God, and the Dead in Chriſt* ſhall riſe firſt?

To this the firſt Anſwer is, Happy, thrice happy are they, who are only the thus learned Preachers of the Goſel, who through

all their Miniſtry ſeek nothing for themſelves or others, but *to be taught of God*; hunger after nothing but the Bread of Life that came down from Heaven, owning no Maſter but Chriſt, no Teacher but his holy Spirit; as unable to join with the Diggers in Pagan Pits of Learning, as with thoſe that *labour for the Wind, and give their Money for that which is not Bread.*

Secondly, with regard to the Demand of *learned Knowledge* in the Chriſtian Church, it may be anſwered, that all that has been ſaid above, is only for the *Increaſe* and *Promotion* of it, and that all Ignorance and Darſtneſs may be driven quite out of it.——The Church of Chriſt is the Seat or School of all the higheſt Knowledge that the human Nature is capable of in this Life. Ignorance is every where but in the Church of Chriſt. ——The Law, the Prophets, and the Goſpel are the only Treaſures of all that can be called the Knowledge either of God or Man; and He in whom the Law, the Prophets, and the Goſpel are fulfilled, is the only well-educated Man, and one of the firſt-rate Scholars in the World. But now, who is he, that has this Wiſdom from theſe rich Treaſures? Who is he, in whom all is known and fulfilled which they teach? The Lip of Truth has told us, that it is he, and he alone, *who loves God with all his Heart, with all*

all his Soul, with all his Mind, and with all his Strength, and his Neighbour as himself. This is the Man that is all Wisdom, all Light, and let into full Possession of all that is meant by all the Mysteries contained in the Law, the Prophets, and the Gospel.——Where this divine Love is wanting, and a diabolical Self sits in its Place, there may be great *Wits*, shining *Critics*, *Orators*, *Poets*, &c. as easily as there may be a profound *Machiavel*, a learned *Hobbos*, or an atheistical *Virtuose*. But would you divinely know the Mysteries of Nature, the Ground and Reason of Good and Evil in this World, the Relation and Connection between the visible and invisible World, how the Things of Time proceed from, are influenced by, and depend upon the Things and Powers of Eternity, there is but *one only* Key of Entrance; nothing can open the Vision but seeing with the Eyes of that *same Love*, which began and carries on all that is, and works in visible and invisible Nature.—Would you *divinely* know the Mysteries of Grace and Salvation, would you go forth as a faithful Witness of gospel Truths, stay till this Fire of divine Love has had its perfect Work within you. For till your Heart is an Altar, on which this heavenly Fire never goes out, you are dead in yourself, and can only be a Speaker of dead Words about Things that never had any Life

Life within you. For without a real Birth of this divine Love in the eſſence of your Soul, be as learned an polite as you will, your Heart is but the dark Heart of fallen Adam, and your Knowledge of the Kingdom of God will be only like that which murdering *Cain* had.——For every Thing is Murder, but that which Love does.——If Love is not the Breath of your Life, the Spirit that forms and governs every Thing that proceeds from you, every Thing that has your Labour, your Allowance and Conſent, you are *broken off* from the Works of God, you have left *his Creation*, you are without God, and your Name, and Nature, and Works can have no other Name, or Nature, but that which is called Pride, Wrath, Envy, Hypocriſy, Hatred, Revenge, and Self-Exaltation, under the Power of Satan in his Kingdom of Darkneſs.——Nothing can poſſibly ſave you from being the certain Prey of all theſe evil Spirits, through the whole Courſe of your Life, but a Birth of *that Love* which is God himſelf, his Light, and Spirit within you.

There is no Knowledge in Heaven, but what proceeds from this Birth of Love, nor is there any Difference between the higheſt Light of an Angel, and the horrid Darkneſs of a Devil, but that which Love has made. ——But now, ſince divine Love can have no

no Beginning but from a Birth of the divine Nature in us, therefore ſays St John, we love him becauſe he FIRST loved us, the ſame as ſaying, we deſire God, becauſe he *firſt* deſired us; for we could not deſire God, but becauſe He firſt deſired us, we could not turn to God, but becauſe he firſt turned to us. And ſo it is, that we could not love God, but becauſe he *firſt* loved us, that is, becauſe he *firſt* by our Creation brought forth, and by our Redemption continued and kept up that ſame Birth of his own Spirit of Love in us.——For as his holy Spirit muſt *firſt* be a Gift to us, or born in us, and then we have *that* which can *worſhip God in Spirit*, ſo his Love muſt of all Neceſſity be a Gift to us, or born in us, and then we have *that of God* in us which alone can love him with his own Love.——A Truth abſolutely aſſerted in theſe Words; *Love is of God, and he that loveth is born of God.*

Let this be my Excuſe to the learned World, for owning no School of Wiſdom, but where the *one only* Leſſon is divine Love; and the *one only* Teacher the Spirit of God. Let no one call this wild or extravagant; it is no wilder a Step, no more injurious to Man, to Truth and Goodneſs, than the owning no God but one.—For to be called from every Thing but divine Love and the Spirit of God, is only being called from

every

every Thing that has the *Curſe* of fallen Nature in it.—And no Man can come from under this Curſe, till he is born again of divine Love, and the Spirit of God. For thus to be born is as much the one ſole Happineſs, Joy, and Glory of Men, both now and ever, as it is the ſole Joy and Glory of Angels eternally in the Heavens. ——Believe me then, thou great Scholar, that all that thou haſt got of Wiſdom or Learning, Day after Day, in any other School but this, will ſtand thee in as much Stead, fill thee with as high heavenly Comfort at the Hour of Death, as all the long Dreams, which Night after Night, thou haſt ever had in thy Sleep.—And till a Man knows this, with as much fullneſs of Conviction as he knows the Vanity of a Dream, he has his full Proof, that he is not yet in the Light of Truth, not yet *taught of God*, nor like-minded with Chriſt.

One of Chriſt's Followers, ſaid *Lord, ſuffer me firſt to go and bury my Father*; the Anſwer was, *Let the Dead bury their Dead, follow thou me.*—Another ſaid to him, *Let me firſt go bid them Farewell that are at Home in my Houſe*; Jeſus anſwered, *No Man having put his Hand to the Plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God.*—Now let it be ſuppoſed that a *Third* had ſaid, Lord, I have left ſeveral *deep-learned* Books at Home, written

ten by the greateſt Maſters of Grammar Logic and Eloquence, ſuffer me firſt to go back for them, leſt loſing the Light which I had from them, I might miſtake the Depth and Truth of thy heavenly Doctrines, or be leſs able to prove and preach them powerfully to others.——Would not ſuch a Requeſt as this have had a Folly and Abſurdity in it, not chargeable upon thoſe two other Requeſts which Chriſt rejected?——And yet, what can ſcholaſtic, claſſic, and critical Divinity ſay for itſelf, but that very ſame Thing which this Requeſter here ſaid?

The Holy Jeſus ſaid, *I am the Light of the World, he that followeth me, walketh not in Darkneſs.*—Here ſpiritual Light and Darkneſs are as immutably fixed, and ſeparated from one another, as the Light and Darkneſs of this World were divided on the firſt Day of the Creation. Jeſus Chriſt, the eternal ſon of God, is the one only Light both of Men and Angels.——Fallen Nature, the ſelfiſh Will, proud Tempers, the higheſt Abilities, the natural Sagacity, Cunning Arts and Subtilties, that are or can be in fallen Men and Angels, are nothing elſe but their fullneſs of ſpiritual Darkneſs, from which nothing but Works of Darkneſs can come forth.——In a Word, *Darkneſs* is the whole *natural Man*; *Light* is *the new born Man from above*. Therefore ſays the Chriſt of God

God, *I am the Light of the World*, becauſe He alone is the Birth of Heaven in the fallen Souls of Men.—But now, who can more reject this divine Light, or more plainly chooſe Darkneſs in ſtead of it, than he who ſeeks to have his Mind enriched, the Faculties of his fallen Soul cultivated by the Literature of Poets, Orators, Philoſophers, Sophiſts, Sceptics, and Critics, born and bred up in the Worſhip and Praiſes of Idol Gods and Goddeſſes? What is this, but like going to the Serpent to be taught the innocent Spirit of the Dove; or to the elegant Luſts of *Anacreon* and *Ovid*, to learn Purity of Heart, and kindle the Flame of heavenly Love in our Souls? Look where you will, this is the Wiſdom of thoſe who ſeek to Pagans for Skill to work in Chriſt's Vineyard; who from long Labours in reſtoring the Grammar, and finding out the hidden Beauties of ſome old vicious Book, ſet up for qualified Artiſts to poliſh the Goſpel *Pearl of great Price*.——Surely this is no better a Proof of their *ſavouring the Things that are of God*, than *Peter* gave, when his Maſter ſaid to him, *Get thee behind me, Satan*.—— A grave Eccleſiaſtic, bringing forth out of his Cloſet ſkilful Meditations on the Commentaries of a murdering *Cæſar*, or the ſublime Rhapſody of an old *Homer*, or the aſtoniſhing Beauties of a modern *Dunciad*, has as much

much Reaſon to think that he is walking in the Light of Chriſt, and led by the Spirit of God, as they have who are only *eating and drinking, and riſing up to play.*

But to ſee the exceeding Folly of expecting Ability in divine Knowledge from any Thing that is the Wit, Wiſdom, or Spirit of the natural Man, you need only read theſe Words of the holy Meſſenger of God, the Elias that was to come. *I indeed,* ſays he, *baptize you with Water, but He that cometh after me, whoſe Shoes Latchet I am not worthy to unlooſe, He ſhall baptize you with the Holy Ghoſt, and with Fire.*——Now if this which the Baptiſt ſaid of Chriſt is not our *Faith,* if we do not receive it as the Truth in which we are firmly to ſtand, then be as learned as we will, we have no better a Faith, or higher Wiſdom, than thoſe blind Rabbies who received not the Teſtimony of John.—A Fire and Spirit from above was the News which he publiſhed to the World; this, and nothing elſe was his Kingdom of God that was at hand.——Now if this *Fire and Spirit* from above has not baptized us into a Birth of the Life of God in our Souls, we have not found that Chriſt and Kingdom of God, to which John bore Witneſs. But if (what is ſtill worſe) we are ſo bewitched through the Sorcery of Learning, as to turn Writers and Preachers againſt this inward, and only

redeeming heavenly Fire and Spirit, we are baptized with the Spirit of thoſe, to whom our Lord ſaid, *Wo unto you Scribes, Phariſees, Hypocrites, for ye ſhut up the Kingdom of Heaven againſt Men; for ye neither go in your-ſelves, neither ſuffer ye them that are entering to go in.*

For what is, or can be the *Fall* of a divine Adam under the Power of Sin, Satan, and Hell, but the Extinction of that heavenly Fire and Spirit, which were his Firſt Union with God and all heavenly Beings.—Say now, that he had not this heavenly Fire and Spirit at the firſt, that nothing lived or breathed in him but that aſtral Fire and Spirit which are the Life and Spirit of all earthly Animals, and then you have a Religion as divine as that of the old Sadducees, who allowed of no Reſurrection, Angel, or Spirit.——For, deny the Truth and Fulneſs of a divine Life in the firſt Man, and then his *Fall* and *Redemption* are equally empty Sounds about nothing. For what can he be fallen from, or redeemed to, if he has now all that *Fire* and *Spirit* of Life which he ever had, or ought to have, and if all that is more than this, is but the Fiction and Dream of a diſtempered Brain? Tell me, why that *burning* and *ſhining Light*, that Man that was *more than a Prophet*, ſhould come with his *Water*, and the Son of God,

God

God of God, ſhould come with his *Fire-Baptiſm*, if Man neither wanted, nor could receive a *higher Water*, and *Fire of Life*, than that which he has in common with the Beaſts of the Field? Why is there all this Stir about Religions, Expiations and Atonements, why all theſe prieſtly Ordinations, Conſecrations, Churches, Sacraments, and Prayers? For if the Fire and Spirit of this World is the one Life, and higheſt Life, both of Man and Beaſts, we have it unaſked for, and on the ſame Terms as the Beaſts have it, and can only loſe it, as they do when they loſe their Exiſtence.

But if *Fire* and *Spirit* from Heaven can alone make heavenly Creatures, and us, to be Children of an heavenly Father; if the Son of God took our fallen Nature upon him, that the firſt *heavenly Fire and Spirit* might again come to Life in us, if divine Life, divine Light, and divine Goodneſs, can only come from them, and only in ſuch Degree, as they are kindled in our Souls, what a Poverty of Senſe is it in thoſe, who are called to a Reſurrection of the firſt divine Life, where a new Creature is taught by that ſame *Unction* from above, whence all the Angels and Principalities of Heaven have their Light and Glory, what a Poverty of Senſe, I ſay, in ſuch, to ſet themſelves down at the Feet of a *Maſter* Tully, and a *Maſter*

Ariſtotle, who only differ from the meaneſt of all other corrupt Men, as the *Teaching Serpent* differed from his fellow Animals, by being *more ſubtil than all the beaſts of the field.*

Behold then your State, ye Minſters that wait at Chriſtian Altars, who will have neither Faith, nor Hope, nor Deſire of *Heavenly Fire* kindled in your Souls, you have a Prieſthood, and an Altar not fit to be named with that, which in Jewiſh Days had a holy Fire from God deſcending upon it, which made Prieſt and Sacrifice acceptable to God, though only Type and Pledge of that *inward celeſtial Fire*, which Chriſt would kindle into a never ceaſing Burning in the living Temples of his new born Children from above.

Complain then no more of Atheiſts, Infidels, and ſuch like open Enemies to the Goſpel Kingdom of God; for whilſt you call heavenly Fire and Spirit, kindled into the ſame *eſſential Life* in us as they are in holy Angels, downright phrenſy, and myſtic Madneſs, you do all that infidel Work within the Church, which they do on the outſide of it.——And if through a learned Fear of having that done to your earthly Reaſon, which was done to *Enoch* when God *took him*, you will own no higher a Regeneration, no *more Birth* of God in your Souls, than

can

can be had by a few cold Drops of Water ſprinkled on the Face, any of the heathen Gods of Wood and Stone are good enough for ſuch an *elementary* Prieſthood.——For let this be told you, as Truth from God, that till *heavenly Fire and Spirit* have a Fulneſs of a Birth within you, you can riſe no higher by your higheſt Learning, than to be elegant Orators about Scripture Words.

Our Lord has ſaid, *The Kingdom of God is within you*, that is, the heavenly Fire and Spirit, which are the true Kingdom and Mainfeſtation of God, are within you. And indeed, where can it be elſe? Yet what learned Pains are taken to remove the literal Meaning from theſe Words, as too viſionary a Thing for learned Ears.——And yet is a Truth obvious to common Senſe, that even this *outward World* of Stars and Elements, neither does, nor can belong to us, or we to it, but ſo far as it is, literally ſpeaking, a *Kingdom within us.* For the outward Kingdom or Powers of this World ſignify nothing to a worldly Man that is dead; but no Man is dead, but becauſe the Kingdom of this World, with all its Powers of Fire, Light, and Spirit, ſtands only *outwardly* about him, but has loſt its Life and Power *within him.*

Say now, out of Reverence to ſound Literature, and abhorrence of Enthuſiaſm, that

the Kingdom of God is not really and virtually within, that its heavenly Fire, Light and Spirit, are not, ought not to be born in a ſober right-minded Follower of Chriſt, and then you have a *good* Diſciple of Chriſt, as abſolutely dead to the Kingdom of Heaven, as the *Corpſe*, that has Nothing of the Fire, Spirit, and Light of this World in it, is dead to all the outward World round about it.

What a Sobriety of Faith and ſound Doctrine is it, to preach up a *Neceſſity* of being living Members of the Kingdom of Heaven, and at the ſame time the *Neceſſity* of orthodoxly holding, that *a heavenly Birth* neither is, nor can, nor ought to be within us! For if it either is, or could, or ought to be within us, then it could not be a brainſick folly to believe, that the literal Words of Chriſt had no Deceit, Falſity, or Deluſion in them, when he ſaid, *Except a Man be born again from above, he cannot ſee, or enter into the Kingdom of God.* That is, he cannot poſſibly have any godlike or divine Goodneſs, he cannot be a Child of an heavenly Father, but from the Nature and Spirit of his heavenly Father brought to a real Birth of Life in him.——Now if, without this divine Birth, all that we have in us is but fallen Adam, a Birth of Sin, the Fleſh, and the Devil, if the Power of this heavenly Birth

Birth is all the Power of Goodneſs that is, or was, or ever can be in a Son of Adam; and if Logic, Learning, and Criticiſm are almoſt every where ſet in high Places, to pronounce and prove it to be mere Enthuſiaſm and ſpiritual Phrenzy, what Wonder is it if Folly of Doctrine, Wickedneſs of Life, Luſts of the Fleſh, Profaneneſs of Spirit Wantonneſs of Wit, Contempt of Goodneſs and *Profeſſion* of Chriſtianity, ſhould all of them ſeem to have their full *Eſtabliſhment* among us?

What Wonder, if Sacraments, Church-Prayers and Preachings, leave high and low, learned and unlearned, Men and Women, Prieſts and People, as unaltered in all their aged Vices, as they leave Children unchanged in their Childiſh Follies? For where the *one only* Fountain of Life and Goodneſs is forſaken, where the Seed of the divine Birth is not alive, and going forwards in the Birth, all the Difference between Man and Man is as Nothing with Reſpect to the Kingdom of God.——It matters not what Name is given to the old earthly Man of Adam's beſtial Fleſh and Blood, whether he be called a zealous *Churchman*, a ſtiff-necked *Jew*, a polite civilized *Heathen*, or a grave *Infidel*; under all theſe Names, the unregenerate old Man has but one and the ſame Nature, without any other Difference but that which

Time, and *Place*, *Education*, *Complexion*, *Hypocriſy*, and *worldly Wiſdom* happen to make in him. By ſuch a one, whether he be Papiſt, or Proteſtant, the Goſpel is only *kept* as a *Book*, and all that is within it is only ſo much Condemnation to the Keeper, juſt as the old Man, a *Jew*, has *kept* the Book of the Law and Prophets, only to be more fully condemned by them.

That the Jewiſh and Chriſtian Church ſtand at this Day in the *ſame Kind* of Apoſtacy, or fallen State, muſt be manifeſt to every one, that will not ſhut his Eyes againſt it. Why are the Jews in a fallen State? It is becauſe they have refuſed Him, who in his whole Proceſs was the Truth, the Subſtance, the Life, and Fulfilling of all that which was outwardly taught, and preſcribed in their Law and Prophets.

But is it not as eaſy to ſee, that the whole Chriſtian Church are in a fallen State, and for the ſame Reaſon, becauſe they are fallen or turned away from that Holy Spirit who was promiſed, and given to be the *one only* Power, Life, and Fulfilling of all that which was *outwardly* taught, and preſcribed by the Goſpel. For the Holy Spirit to come was juſt the ſame ALL, and FULFILLING of the whole Goſpel, as a Chriſt to come was the *All*, and the *Fulfilling* of the Law.——The Jew therefore with his Old

Old Teſtament, not owning Chriſt in all his Proceſs to be the Truth and Life, and Fulfiller of their Law, is juſt in that ſame Apoſtaſy, as the Chriſtian with his New Teſtament, not owning the holy Spirit in all his Operations, to be his only Light, Guide, and Governor.——For as all Types and Figures in the Law were but empty Shadows without Chriſt's being the Life and Power of them, ſo all that is written in the Goſpel is but dead Letter, unleſs the Holy Spirit in Man be the living Reader, the living Rememberer, and the living Doer of them. Therefore, where the Holy Spirit is not thus owned and received, as the *whole Power* and Life of the Goſpel State, it is no Marvel, that Chriſtians have no more of Goſpel Virtues, than the Jews have of Patriarchal Holineſs, or that the ſame Luſts and Vices which proſper among Jews, ſhould break forth with as much Strength in fallen Chriſtendom. For the New Teſtament not ending in the Coming of the holy Spirit, with Fullneſs of Power over Sin and Hell, and the Devil, is but the ſame, and no better a Help to *Heaven*, than the Old Teſtament without the Coming of a Meſſiah.—Need I now ſay any more, to demonſtrate the Truth of that which I firſt ſaid was the one Thing abſolutely eſſential, and only available to Man's Salvation, namely, the

SPIRIT of God brought again to his FIRST POWER of LIFE IN US. This was the Glory of Man's Creation, and this alone can be the Glory of his Redemption.——All beſides this, that paſſes for a *Time* betwixt God and Man, be it what it will, ſhews only our Fall and Diſtance from God, and in its beſt State has only the Nature of a good Road, which is only good, becauſe that which we want is at the End of it.—— Whilſt God calls us by various outward Diſpenſations, by creaturely Things, figurative Inſtitutions, *&c.* it is a full Proof, that we are not yet in our true State, or that Union with God which is intended by our Redemption.

God ſaid to *Moſes, Put off thy Shoes, for the Place whereon thou ſtandeſt is holy Ground.* Now this which God ſaid to *Moſes*, is only that very ſame Thing, which Circumciſion, the Law, Sacrifices, and Sacraments ſay to Man. They are in themſelves nothing elſe but outward Significations of *inward Impurity*, and *loſt Holineſs*, and can do no more in themſelves, but intimate, point, and direct to an *inward Life* and new Birth from above, that is to be ſought after.

But here lies the great Miſtake, or rather idolatrous Abuſe of all God's outward Diſpenſations.—They are taken for the Thing itſelf, for the Truth and Eſſence of Religion.

That

That which the learned Jews did with the outward Letter of their Law, that ſame do learned Chriſtians with the outward Letter of their Goſpel.—Why did the Jewiſh Church ſo furiouſly and obſtinately cry out againſt Chriſt, Let him be crucified? It was becauſe their letter-learned Ears, their worldly Spirit, and Temple-Orthodoxy, would not bear to hear of an inward Saviour, not bear to hear of being born again of his Spirit, of eating his Fleſh, and drinking his Blood, of his dwelling in them, and They in Him. ——To have their Law of Ordinances, their Temple-Pomp *ſunk* into ſuch a *Fulfilling* Saviour as this, was ſuch enthuſiaſtic Jargon to their Ears, as forced their ſober, rational Theology, to call Chriſt, Beelzebub, his Doctrine, Blaſphemy, and all for the Sake of Moſes and rabbinic Orthodoxy.

Need it now be aſked, Whether the true Chriſt of the Goſpel be leſs blaſphemed, leſs crucified, by that Chriſtian Theology which rejects an inward Chriſt, a Saviour living and working in the Soul, as its inward Light and Life, generating his own Nature and Spirit in it as its only Redemption. whether that which rejects all this as myſtic Madneſs, be not that very ſame old Jewiſh, Wiſdom ſprung up in Chriſtian Theology, which ſaid of Chriſt when teaching theſe very Things, *He is mad, why hear ye him?*

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Our bleſſed Lord in a Parable ſets forth the blind Jews, as ſaying of himſelf, *We will not have this man to reign* OVER us.—— The ſober minded Chriſtian Scholar has none of this Jewiſh Blindneſs, He only ſays of Chriſt, we will not have this Man to REIGN IN US, and ſo keeps clear of ſuch myſtic Abſurdity, as St *Paul* fell into, when he enthuſiaſtically ſaid, *Yet not I, but Chriſt that liveth in me.*

Chriſtian Doctors reproach the old learned Rabbies for their vain Faith, and carnal Deſire of a *glorious, temporal, outward* Chriſt, who ſhould ſet up their Temple-Worſhip all over the World.——Vanity indeed, and learned Blindneſs enough!

But nevertheleſs, in theſe Condemners of rabbinc Blindneſs, St *Paul*'s words are remarkably verified, viz. *Wherein thou judgeſt another, thou condemneſt thyſelf, for thou that judgeſt doeſt the ſame Thing.*—For, take away all that from Chriſt which Chriſtian Doctors call Enthuſiaſm, ſuppoſe him not to be an inward Birth, a new Life and Spirit within us, but only an *outward, ſeparate, Diſtant* heavenly Prince, no more really in us, than our high Cathedrals are in the *third Heavens*, but only by an inviſible hand from his Throne on high, ſome Way or other raiſing and helping *great Scholars*, or great *temporal* Powers, to make a Rock in every Nation for his Church to ſtand upon; ſuppoſe all this

(which is the very Marrow of modern Divinity) and then you have that very *outward* Chriſt, and that very *outward* Kingdom, which the carnal Jew dreamed of, and for the Sake of which the Spiritual Chriſt was then nailed to the Croſs, and is ſtill crucified by the new riſen Jew in the Chriſtian Church. ——If it now be aſked, Whence, or from what, comes all this Spiritual Blindneſs, which from Age to Age thus miſtakes and defeats all the gracious Deſigns of God towards fallen Mankind? Look at the Origin of the *firſt Sin*, and you ſee it all.——Had *Eve* deſired no Knowledge but what came from God, Paradiſe had been the Habitation of her and all her offſpring.——If after Paradiſe loſt, Jews and Chriſtians had deſired no Knowledge but what came from God, the Law and Prophets had kept the Jew cloſe to the firſt Tree of Life, and the Chriſtian Church had been a Kingdom of God, and Communion of Saints to this Day.

But now Corruption, Sin, Death, and every Evil of the World have entered into the Church, the Spouſe of Chriſt, juſt as they entered into Eve, the Spouſe of Adam in Paradiſe, in the ſame Way, and from the ſame Cauſe, *viz. a Deſire of more, or other Knowledge, than that which comes from God alone.*——This Deſire is the Serpent's Voice *within* every Man, which does all that

to

to him, and in him, which the Serpent at the Tree did to Eve.——It carries on the firſt deceit, it ſhews and recommends to him that ſame beautiful Tree of *own Will*, *own Wit*, and *own Wiſdom*, ſpringing up within him, which *Eve* ſaw in the Garden, and yet ſo blind is this Love of Wiſdom, as not to ſee that his eating of it is in the ſtricteſt Truth his eating of the ſame forbidden Fruits as *Eve* did, and keeping up in himſelf all that *Death* and Separation from God, which the firſt Knowledge-Hunger brought forth.

Let then the eager Searcher into *Words* for Wiſdom, the Book-Devourer, the Opinion-Broker, the Exalter of human Reaſon, and every projecting Builder of religious Syſtems, be told this, that the Thirſt and Pride of being *learnedly Wiſe* in the Things of God, is keeping up the groſſeſt Ignorance of them, and is nothing elſe but *Eve*'s old Serpent, and *Eve*'s evil Birth within them, and does no better work in the Church of Chriſt, than her Thirſt after Wiſdom did in the Paradiſe of God.——Speak, Lord, for thy Servant heareth, is the one only Way by which any Man ever did, or ever can attain divine Knowledge, and divine Goodneſs.——To knock at any other door but this, is but like aſking Life of that which is itſelf Dead, or praying to him for Bread who has nothing but ſtones to give.

Now

Now ſtrange as all this may ſeem to the labour-learned Poſſeſſor of far-fetched Book-Riches, yet it is ſaying no more, nor any Thing elſe, but that which Chriſt ſaid in theſe Words, *Except ye be converted, and become as little Children, ye cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* For, if claſſic Goſpellers, Linguiſt Critics, Scripture-logicians, Salvation Orators, able Dealers in the grammatic Powers of Hebrew, Greek, and Roman Phraſes, Idioms, Tropes, Figures, &c. &c. can ſhew, that by raiſing themſelves high in theſe Attainments, they are the *very Men* that are *ſunk Down* from themſelves into Chriſt's little Children of the Kingdom of God, then it may be alſo ſaid, that he who is *labouring, ſcheming, and fighting* for all the Riches he can get from *both the Indies,* is the *very Man* that has left all to follow Chriſt, the very Man that *labours not for the Meat that periſhes.*

Shew me a Man whoſe Heart has no Deſire, or Prayer in it, but to love God with his whole Soul and Spirit, and his Neighbour as himſelf, and then you have ſhewn me the Man who knows Chriſt, and is known of him;——the beſt and wiſeſt Man in the World, in whom the firſt paradiſical Wiſdom and Goodneſs are come to Life.——Not a ſingle Precept in the Goſpel, but is the Precept of his own Heart, and the Joy of that

that new-born heavenly Love which is the Life and Light of his Soul.——In this Man all that came from the old Serpent is trod under his Feet; not a Spark of Self, of Pride, of Wrath, of Envy, of Covetouſneſs, or worldly Wiſdom can have the *leaſt Abode* in him, becauſe that Love, which fulfilleth the whole Law and the Prophets, that Love which is God and Chriſt, both in Angels and Men, is the Love that gives Birth, and Life, and Growth to every Thing that is either Thought, or Word, or Action in Him.—And if He has no Share or Part with fooliſh Errors, cannot be toſſed about with every Wind of Doctrine, it is becauſe, to be Always governed by *this Love*, is the ſame Thing as to be Always *taught of God.*

On the other Hand, ſhew me a Scholar as full of Learning, as the *Vatican* is of Books, and he will be juſt as likely to give all that he has for the *Goſpel-Pearl*, as he would be if he was as rich as *Cræſus*. Let no one here imagine, that I am writing againſt all human Literature, Arts and Sciences, or that I wiſh the World to be without them. I am no more on Enemy to them, than to the common uſeful Labours of Life.——It is *literal Learning, verbal Contention, and critical Striſe*, about the Things of God, that I charge with Folly and Miſchief to Religion and in this, I have all learned Chriſtendom, both Popiſh and

and Proteſtant on my Side. For they both agree in charging each other with a *bad* and *falſe* Goſpel-State, becauſe of *that* which their Learning, Logic, and Criticiſm do for them. Say not then, that it is only the *illiterate* Enthuſiaſt that condemns human Learning in the goſpel Kingdom of God. For when he condemns the Blindneſs and Miſchief of popiſh Logic and Criticiſm, he has all the Learned Proteſtant World with him; and when he lays the ſame Charge to Proteſtant Learning, he has a much larger Kingdom of popiſh great Scholars, logically and learnedly affirming the ſame Thing. So that the private Perſon, charging human Learning with ſo much Miſchief to the Church, is ſo far from being led by *Enthuſiaſm*, that he is led by all the *Church-learning* that is in the World.

Again, all learned Chriſtendom agrees in the ſame Charge againſt temporal Power in the Church, as hurtful to the very Being and Progreſs of a *Salvation-Kingdom* that is not of this World, as ſupporting Doctrines that human Learning has brought into it. And true it is and muſt be, that human Power can only ſupport and help forward human Things.——The *Proteſtant* brings Proof from a thouſand Years Learning and Doctrines, that the *Pope* is an unjuſt Uſurper of temporal Power in the Church, which is

Chriſt's

Chriſt's ſpiritual Spouſe.—The Papiſts bring the learning of as many Ages to ſhew that a temporal Head of the Church is an Anti-chriſtian Uſurpation.——And yet (N. B.) he who holds Chriſt to be the one, only *Head*, *Heart*, and *Life* of the Church, and that *no Man can call* Jeſus, Lord, *but by the Holy Ghoſt*, paſſes with the learned of both theſe People for a brain-ſick Enthuſiaſt.—— Is it not then high Time to look out for ſome better Ground to ſtand upon, than ſuch Learning as this? Now look where you will, through all the whole Nature of Things, no divine Wiſdom, Knowledge, Goodneſs, and deliverance from Sin, are any where to be found for fallen Man, but in theſe *two Points*; (1.) a total entire Entrance into the *whole Proceſs* of Chriſt; (2.) a total Reſignation to, and ſole Dependance upon the continual Operation of the holy Ghoſt, or Chriſt come again in the Spirit, to be our never ceaſing Light, Teacher, and Guide into all thoſe Ways of Virtue, in which He himſelf walked in the Fleſh. All beſides this, call it by what Name you will, is but dead Work, a vain Labour of the *old Man* to new create himſelf. And here let it be well obſerved that in theſe *two Points* conſiſts the whole of that *myſtic* Divinity, to which a *Jewiſh* Orthodoxy at this Day is ſo great an Enemy. For nothing elſe is meant, or taught by it but

but a total dying to *Self* (called the Proceſs or Croſs of Chriſt) that a new Creature (called Chriſt in us, or Chriſt come in the Spirit) may be begotten in the Purity and Perfection of the firſt Man's Union with God.—Now, let the Chriſtian World forget, or depart from this *one Myſtic* Way of Salvation, let any thing elſe be thought of or truſted to but the *Croſs* of Chriſt, and the *Spirit* of Chriſt; and then, though *Churches*, and *Preachers*, and *Prayers*, and *Sacraments* are every where in Plenty, yet nothing better can come of it than a Chriſtian Kingdom of *Pagan Vices*, along with a Mouth-Belief of *an holy catholic Church, and Communion of Saints*.——To this melancholy Truth all Chriſtendom both at home and abroad bears full Witneſs. Who need be told, that there is not a Corruption or Depravity of human Nature, no kinds of Pride, Wrath, Envy, Malice, and Self-love; no ſorts of Hypocriſy, Falſeneſs, Curſing, Swearing, Perjury, and Cheating, no Wantonneſs of Luſt in every Kind of Debauchery, but are as common all over Chriſtendom, as Towns and Villages.——But to paſs theſe by, I ſhall only inſtance in *two or three Particulars*, which though little obſerved, and leſs condemned, yet fully ſhew that the *Beaſt*, the *Whore*, and the *fiery Dragon* are in Poſſeſſion of Proteſtant as well as Popiſh Churches.

And *Firſt*, can it be ſaid that *Mammon* is leſs *ſerved* by Chriſtian, than by Jews and Infidels? Or can there be a fuller Proof that Chriſtians, Jews, and Infidels are equally fallen from God and all divine Worſhip, ſince Truth itſelf has told us, that we *cannot ſerve God and Mammon?* Is not this as unalterable a Truth, and of as great Moment, as if it had been ſaid, *Ye cannot ſerve God and Baal?* Or can it with any Truth or Senſe be affirmed, that the *Mammoniſt* has more of Chriſt in him than the *Baaliſt*, or is more or leſs an Idolator for being called a Chriſtian, a Jew, or an Infidel? Look now at all thoſe Particulars which Chriſt charged upon the Jewiſh Prieſts, Scribes, and Phariſees, and you will ſee them all acted over again in the fallen State of Chriſtendom. And if God's Prophets were again in the World, they would have juſt the ſame Complaints againſt the *fallen* Chriſtian Church, as they had againſt the old carnal ſtiff-necked Jews, *namely, that of their Silver and Gold they had made themſelves Idols*, Hoſ. 8. iv. For though figured Idol-Gods of Gold are not now worſhipped either by Jews or Chriſtians, yet Silver and Gold with that which belongs to them is the Mammon God, that ſits and reigns in their Hearts. How elſe could there be that univerſal Strife through all Chriſtendom, who ſhould ſtand in the richeſt and higheſt Place,

to

to preach up the humility of Chriſt, and offer ſpiritual Sacrifices unto God? What God but Mammon could put into the Hearts of Chriſt's Ambaſſadors, to make, or want to make a Gain of that Goſpel, which from the Beginning to the End means nothing elſe but *Death* to Self, and *Separation* from every *View*, *Temper*, and *Affection*, that has any Connection with *the Luſts of the Fleſh*, *Luſt of the Eyes*, *and the Pride of Life?*—— Our Bleſſed Lord ſaid a Word to the Jews, that might well have made *their Ears to tingle*, when he told them that they *had made his Father's Houſe a Den of Thieves*; becauſe Sheep and Oxen were ſold, and Money-Changers ſitting in the outer Court of the Temple.—Now if you will ſay, that Mammon has brought forth no Prophanation like this in our Chriſtian Church, your beſt Proof muſt be this, becauſe our *Church-Sale* is not Oxen and Sheep, but holy Things, *Cures of Souls*, *Parſonages*, *Vicarages*, &c. and our Money-Changers, our Buyers and Sellers are chiefly conſecrated Perſons.

Looks at Things ſpiritual, and Things temporal, and ſay if you can, that the ſame Arts, the ſame Paſſions, and worldly Wiſdom are not as viſibly Active in the One, as in the Other.——For if Chriſt at leaving the World had ſaid to his Diſciples, Labour to be Rich;—Make full Proviſion for the Fleſh —Be conformed to the World;—Court the

Favour and Intereſt of great Men,—Cloath yourſelves with all the worldy Honours, Diſtinctions and Powers you can get; I appeal to every Man, whether Popiſh and Proteſtant Churches need do any Thing elſe, than that which they now do, and have done for Ages, to prove their Faithfulneſs to ſuch a Maſter, and their full Obedience to his Precepts. And now, what is all this in Truth and Reality, but the ſame *Whore* riding upon the *ſame Beaſt*, not here or there, but through all fallen Chriſtendom, where God has only, in every Age, People, and Language, his ſeven Thouſands, who have not bowed the Knee to Mammon?

Again, *Secondly*, *Ye have heard*, ſays our Lord, *that it hath been ſaid by them of Old*; *thou ſhalt not forſwear thyſelf, but ſhalt perform unto the Lord thine Oaths.*—The *Jews* practiſed *promiſſary Oaths*, and thought all was well when there was a Performance of them.——But this, with Numbers of other Jewiſh Practices, was not to be allowed in this Kingdom of God, that was then come into the World.——Chriſt *totally* rejects, and *abſolutely* forbids it, ſaying, *I ſay uno you, ſwear not at all.* But inſtead of it, he appoints and abſolutely demands a moſt perfect Simplicity of Language, to ſupport and adorn the mutual Communication of thoſe, whom He had created again unto Righteouſneſs, and given Power to become Sons of God, ſaying,

aying, *Let your Communication be YEA, YEA, and NAY, NAY,* for (N. B.) *Whatsoever is more than this, cometh of Evil.*——What more could have been done by Christ to prevent the Use, or hinder the Entrance of an Oath into his Church? What then shall we say of the present Universal Christendom? For if Christ had commanded the direct contrary, had He said, behold I give you this new Commandment, let not a simple YEA and NAY be of any Avail in all your Communication, but let *Oaths be required* of all that bear my Name, as a Proof that they belong to me, and Act in all their Dealings as become Saints; *for whatsoever is less than this, cometh of Evil.*——Had this been Christ's new Commandment, all the Churches of Christendom, as well Popish as Protestant, and these reformed Kingdoms of Great-Britain and Ireland, might have much to boast of their Obedience to it. For through Town and Country, in all ignorant Villages, in all learned Colleges, in all Courts Spiritual and Temporal, what with *Law*-Oaths, *Corporation*-Oaths, *Office*-Oaths, *Trade*-Oaths, *Qualification*-Oaths, *Simony*-Oaths, *Bribery*-Oaths, *Election*-Oaths, &c. &c. &c. there is more Swearing and For-swearing, than all History reports of any Idol-worshipping Nations.—It was said of Old, *Because of swearing the Land mourneth:* It is full as true to say now,

Becauſe of Swearing the Land rejoyceth in Iniquity, is full of Prophaneneſs, and without any Fear or Awe of the divine Majeſty, daily ſwallowing down all Manner of Oaths, in the ſame *good State* of Mind, and with as much *ſerious Reflection*, as Pot-companions ſwallow down their Liquor.

He that deſpiſeth me, ſays Chriſt, *deſpiſeth not me, but him that ſent me.*——Can that Church, which abſolutely requires That which Chriſt has abſolutely forbidden, be free from the moſt open and public Deſpiſing of Chriſt, which in full Contrariety to his expreſs Word, refuſes the *Sufficiency* of that *Yea* and *Nay*, which He has commanded to be ſufficient; and what is ſtill more wonderful, compels all Orders of Chriſtians to ſwear by that very Book, which ſays to all, whether high or low, *Prince*, *Prieſts*, or *People*, SWEAR NOT AT ALL?

If the Swearing Law was to order, that inſtead of kiſſing the Goſpel-Book, the Swearer ſhould ſay, *In Remembrance of, and in Regard to the Words of Chriſt, forbidding me to ſwear*, I make *this Oath*, who would not ſee the open Contempt of Chriſt and his Goſpel? But the Contempt of both is as truly there, when the Goſpel-Book is kiſſed by the Swearer; for the Book has Nothing relating to Oaths but thoſe Words of Chriſt, which abſolutely forbid the Uſe of them.—

Inſtead,

Inſtead, therefore, of a SO HELP ME GOD and his HOLY GOSPEL, it might have been much better, if every Swearing Law through all Chriſtendom had obliged every Swearer to *finiſh* his Oath with theſe Words, Let God and his holy Goſpel PARDON ME IN THIS ONE THING.

If it here be aſked, Whether I would have all *private* Chriſtians to beggar themſelves, and loſe all their Right and Title to Houſe and Land, which by the Laws of Chriſtendom, cannot be preſerved without certain promiſſary Oaths? I ſay not ſo.——But my Anſwer is, that as the *Jews* were of old carried captive into *Babylon*, ſo as real a Captivity, and full as great, muſt happen to all private Chriſtians, born and living under a *fallen State* of governing Chriſtendom.—For whether it be a Pope, or a Nebuchadnezzar, popiſh, or proteſtant Church Governors, that make the Goods and Properties of private Chriſtians only poſſible to be poſſeſſed by Obedience to their ſwearing Laws, the Captivity is the ſame.——And as God bore with the Want of a Jeruſalem-Worſhip in thoſe Jews, whoſe Captivity ſuffered them not to perform it, ſo it may well be hoped and believed, that he will bear with that Want of Goſpel Purity in the *Yea* and *Nay* of private Chriſtians, which their Captivity under a fallen State of Chriſtian

Government ſuffers them not conſtantly to adhere to.——And alſo, that the Piety of private Chriſtians, loving and longing after Goſpel-Purity of Communication, under their Church-Captivity, will be as acceptable to God, as the Piety of captive Jews was, who though living under Heathen Laws, and forced to ſay their Prayers in *Babylon*, yet had always their Eyes turned towards, and their Hearts longing after *Jeruſalem* and its holy Worſhip.

What I write is not to ſhew that Chriſtendom's Oaths, and the Manner of them, are not to be ſubmitted to by any private good Chriſtian, but to ſhew in the plaineſt Manner, that the Laws of Chriſtendom, which make them neceſſary, are a full Proof that the Spirit which governs all Chriſtendom is fallen away from the Spirit of Chriſt; and alſo to ſhew, that if groſs Impiety runs through all the Chriſtian World, if much and much the greateſt Part of Swearing Chriſtians have loſt all pious Fear of Oaths and Swearing, it is becauſe the Neceſſity of Swearing meets every Man, in almoſt every Thing, at the Peril of loſing all that he has, or can have, unleſs he will Swear.

When the Matter of an Oath is a manifeſt Lye, or an Engagement to do ſome wicked Thing, all is to be ſuffered rather than

than take it.——But where there is nothing false or bad, affirmed or promised, nor any Blame chargeable, but that of going farther than our Lord's *Yea* and *Nay*, it is plain from Christ's Words, that the *Evil* is only in *That*, and *There*, from whence the Oath comes.

When a Person swears of his own Accord, or wantonly, then the Oath comes of, or from the *Evil* of his own Heart. But when a Christian, in whose Heart the Simplicity and Purity of Gospel-Language is written and loved, when he submits to use more than a *Yea* or *Nay*, compelled by that Authority which makes the Refusal to be the Loss of Goods, and bodily Imprisonment, then such Departure from Gospel-Language comes of and from the Evil in *that Power* which required it, whether it be a *Pope*, a *Kirk*, a *Church*, an *Assembly* of Divines, or a Nebuchadnezzar.——All this, I say, is plain from Christ's own Words.—*Let your Yea be Yea*, and *your Nay Nay*. But why so? It is because *whatsoever* is *more than this cometh of Evil*, that is, is caused by Evil.——Therefore the Evil that is in the Use of an imposed Oath is, by the Words of Christ, charged upon and confined to That, which causes or forces it to be done.—For that which the Oath comes from, is that which our Saviour calls the Evil

Evil of it; but the Oath comes from that which cauſes it, therefore, that which cauſes Swearing, is by our Saviour's Words charged with all the Evil of the Oath.—— But (N. B.) all this ſuppoſed Freedom from the Evil of an impoſed Oath, in the private Chriſtian's Submiſſion to the Uſe of it, is only *then* and *there*, where what is affirmed, or denied by the Oath, has all that Innocence, Truth, or Righteouſneſs in it, which the true *Yea* or *Nay* of Chriſt might juſtly affirm, or deny.

But here let it be well obſerved, that nothing that has here been ſaid, is intended to blame the Piety of thoſe, who on no Account whatſoever will be prevailed upon to take any Kind of Oath, becauſe our Lord and Maſter has ſaid, *Swear not at all. I am ſo far from blaming this,* or *looking upon it* as the Effect of a falſe or blind Piety, that I wiſh with my whole Heart, it may come to be the Piety of all the three Eſtates of this Kingdom; and that all ſwearing, whether in ſecular or religious Matters, may by all the Authority of the Nation be as utterly condemned, as abſolutely renounced, and declared to be as Antichriſtian, as the Pope's Supremacy.

In a Word, That which calls for, and requires Oaths among Chriſtians, requires That which Chriſt forbids; but governing Chriſtendom

Chriſtendom every where eſtabliſhes, requires, and even compels Chriſtians to ſwear, therefore governing Chriſtendom is fallen from Chriſt, and acts by and through that Spirit, which being contrary to Chriſt, is and muſt be called ANTICHRIST.

But to proceed now to a *third* and laſt Inſtance, which I ſhall mention, of the full Power of Antichriſt in and through every Part of governing Chriſtendom.

In the darkeſt Ages of Romiſh Superſtition, a *Martial Spirit* of Zeal and Glory for the Goſpel broke forth in *Kings*, *Cardinals*, *Biſhops*, *Monks*, and *Friars*, to lead the Sheep of Chriſt, *Saints*, *Pilgrims*, *Penitents*, and *Sinners* of all Kinds, to proceed in Battle Array, to kill, devour, and drive the *Turks* from the Land of *Paleſtine*, and the old earthly *Jeruſalem*. Theſe Bloodthirſty Expeditions were called an *holy War*, becauſe it was a fighting for the *holy Land*; they were called alſo a *Croiſade*, becauſe Croſſes and Crucifixes made the greateſt Glitter among the ſharpened Inſtruments of human Murder.—Thus under the Banner of the Croſs went forth an Army of Church Wolves, to deſtroy the Lives of thoſe whom the Lamb of God died on the Croſs to ſave.

The Light which broke out at the *Reformation* abhorred the bloody ſuperſtitious Zeal of

of these Catholic Heroes.——But (N. B.) what followed from this new risen, reforming Light, what came forth instead of these *holy Croisades?* Why Wars, if possible, still more diabolical.—Christian Kingdoms with blood-thirsty Piety destroying, devouring, and burning one another, for the Sake of That which was called Popery, and That which was called Protestantism.

Now who can help seeing, that Satan, the Prince of the Powers of Darkness, had here a much greater Triumph over Christendom, than in all the holy Wars and Croisades that went before? For all that was then done by such high-spirited Fighters for old *Jerusalem*'s Earth, could not be said to be so much done against *Gospel-Light*, because not one in a Thousand of those holy Warriors were allowed to see what was in the Gospel. But now, with the Gospel opened in every one's Hands, Papists and Protestants make open War against every *divine Virtue* that belonged to Christ, or that can unite them with that Lamb of God, that taketh away the Sins of the World:—I say against every divine, redeeming Virtue of the Lamb of God, for these are *the Enemies* which Christian War conquers. For there is not a Virtue of Gospel-goodness, but has its Death-blow from it.——For no Virture has any Gospel-goodness in it any further,

ther, than as it has its Birth and Growth in and from the Spirit of Chriſt; where his Nature and Spirit is not, there is nothing but the Heathen to be found, which is but ſaying the ſame Truth, as when the Apoſtle ſaid, that He who *hath not*, or is *not led by the Spirit of Chriſt, is none of his.*

Now fancy to yourſelf Chriſt, the Lamb of God, after his divine Sermon on the Mount, putting himſelf at the Head of a blood-thirſty Army, or St *Paul* going forth with a Squadron of Fire and Brimſtone, to make more Havock in human Lives than a devouring Earthquake.

But if this be too blaſphemous an Abſurdity to be ſuppoſed, what follows, but that the Chriſtian who acts in the deſtroying Fury of War, acts in full Contrariety to the whole Nature and Spirit of Chriſt, and can no more be ſaid to be led by his Spirit, or be one with Him, than thoſe his Enemies, who *came forth with Swords and Staves to take him.*

Blinded Proteſtants think they have the Glory of ſlaughtering blind Papiſts; and the victorious Papiſt claims the Merit of having conquered Troops of Heretics: But alas! the Conqueſt is equally great on both Sides, both are entitled to the ſame Victory: and the glorious Victory on both Sides, is only

that

that of having *Goſpel Goodneſs* equally under their Feet.

When a *Moſt Chriſtian* Majeſty, with his Catholic Church, ſings a *Te Deum* at the high Altar, for Rivers of Proteſtant Blood poured out; or an *Evangelick* Church ſings Praiſe and Glory to the Lamb of God, for helping them from his holy Throne in Heaven to make popiſh Towns like to Sodom and Gomorrha, they blaſpheme God as much as *Cain* would have done, had he offered a Sacrifice of Praiſe to God, for helping him to murder his Brother.——Let ſuch Worſhippers of God be told this, that the Field of Blood gives all its Glory to Satan, who was a Murderer from the Beginning, and will to the End of his Reign be the only Receiver of all the Glory that can come from it.

A glorious *Alexander* in the heathen World is a Shame and Reproach to the human Nature, and does more Miſchief to Mankind in a few Years, than all the wild Beaſts, in every Wilderneſs upon Earth, have ever done from the Beginning of the World to this Day.——But the ſame Heroe, making the ſame Ravage from Country to Country with Chriſtian Soldiers, has more Thanks from the Devil, than twenty Pagan *Alexanders* would ever have had.——To make Men kill Men, is Meat and Drink to that roaring

roaring Adverſary of Mankind, who goeth about ſeeking whom he may devour. But to make Chriſtians kill Chriſtians for the Sake of Chriſt's Church, is his higheſt *Triumph* over the higheſt *Mark*, which Chriſt has ſet upon thoſe whom he has purchaſed by his Blood.——*This Commandment*, ſays he, *I give unto you, that ye love one another.*—— *By this ſhall Men know that ye are my Diſciples, if ye love one another as I have loved you.*—

Can the *Dueliſt*, who had rather ſheath his Sword in the Bowels of his Brother, than ſtifle that which he call an Affront, can he be ſaid to have *this Mark* of his belonging to Chriſt? and may not he that is called his SECOND, more juſtly be ſaid to be *Second* to none in the Love of human Murder? ——Now, what is the Difference between the haughty Dueliſt with his provided *Second*, meeting his Adverſary with Sword and Piſtol behind a Hedge, or a Houſe, and two Kingdoms with their high-ſpirited Regiments ſlaughtering one another in the Field of Battle? It is the Difference that is between the Murder of one Man, and the Murder of an hundred thouſand.

Now imagine the Dueliſt *faſting* and *confeſſing* his Sins to God To-day, becauſe he is engaged to fight his Brother To-morrow; fancy again the Conqueror got into his

Closet, on his bended Knees, lifting up Hands and Heart to God for blessing his Weapons with the Death of his Brother; and then you have a Picture in *Little* of the great Piety that begins and ends the Wars all over heavenly Christendom.

What Blindness can well be greater, than to think that a Christian Kingdom, as such, can have any other Goodness, or Union with Christ, but that very Goodness, which makes the private Christian to be one with Him, and a Partaker of the divine Nature? Or that Pride, Wrath, Ambition, Envy, Covetousness, Rapine, Resentment, Revenge, Hatred, Mischief, and Murder are only the *Works of the Devil*, whilst they are committed by private or single Men; but when carried on by all the Strength and Authority, all the Hearts, Hands, and Voices of a whole Nation, that the Devil is then quite driven out of them, loses all his Right and Power in them, and they become holy Matter of Church Thanksgivings, and the sacred Oratory of Pulpits.

Look at that which the private Christian is to do to his Neighbour, or his Enemy, and you see that very Thing, which one Christian Kingdom is to do to another. Look at that which proves a Man to be not led and governed by the Spirit of Christ, and you see that, which proves a Kingdom to be under

under the Dominion and Power of Satan.—Wherever *Pride* is, there the Devil is riding in his firſt fiery Chariot; and wherever *Wrath* is, there he has his firſt murdering Sword at Work. What is it that fallen Man wants to be redeemed from, but Pride and Wrath, Envy and Covetouſneſs? He can have no higher Separation or Apoſtaſy from God, no fuller Union with Satan and his Angels, than he has of the Spirit of theſe Tempers: They conſtitute that, which whether you call it SELF, or *Satan* in him, the Meaning is the ſame. Now ſuppoſe Man not fallen into this *Self* or *Satan*, and then there could be no more War or fighting in him, than there was in the WORD made Man in our Fleſh. Or ſuppoſe him redeemed from his fallen Nature, by a new Birth of the Lamb of God born in his Soul, and then he can no more be hired to kill Men glorioufly in the Field, than to carry a dark Lanthorn by Night to a *Powder-Plot*.

Love Goodneſs and Communication of Good is the immutable Glory and Perfection of the divine Nature, and nothing can have Union with God, but that which partakes of *this* Goodneſs.—The Love that brought forth the Exiſtence of all Things, changes not through the Fall of its Creatures, but is continually at work, to bring back all fallen

Nature and Creature to their firſt State of Goodneſs. All that paſſes for a Time between God and his fallen Creature is but one and the ſame Thing, working for one and the ſame End; and though *this* is called *Wrath*, *that* called *Puniſhment*, *Curſe*, and *Death*, it is all, from the Beginning to the End, nothing but the Work of the firſt creating Love, and means nothing elſe, does nothing elſe, but thoſe Works of purifying Fire, which muſt, and alone can burn away all that dark Evil, which ſeparates the Creature from its firſt created Union with God.—God's Providence, from the *Fall* to the *Reſtitution* of all Things, is doing the *ſame Thing* as when he ſaid to the dark Chaos of fallen Nature, *Let there be light*; He ſtill ſays, and will continue ſaying the ſame Thing, till there is no Evil of Darkneſs left in all that is Nature and Creature.—God *creating*, God *illuminating*, God *ſanctifying*, God *threatening* and *puniſhing*, God *forgiving* and *redeeming*, is but one and the ſame eſſential, immutable, never ceaſing Working of the divine Nature. *That* in God, which *illuminates* and *glorifies* Saints and Angels in Heaven, is that very ſame Working of the divine Nature, which *wounds*, *pains*, *puniſhes*, and *purifies* Sinners upon Earth. And (N. B.) every number of deſtroyed Sinners, whether thrown by *Noah*'s flood, or *Sodom*'s Brimſtone, into the

terrible Furnace of a Life, inſenſible of any Thing but new Forms of raging Miſery till Judgment's Day, muſt through the *all-working, all-redeeming* Love of God, which never ceaſes, come at laſt to know that they had loſt, and have found again, *ſuch a God of Love* as this.

And if *long* and *long Ages* of fiery Pain, and tormenting Darkneſs, fall to the Share of many, or moſt of God's Apoſtate Creatures, they will laſt no longer, than till the great fire of God has melted *all Arrogance* into Humility, and all that is SELF has died in the long Agonies and Bloody Sweats of a loſt God, which is that *all-ſaving* Croſs of Chriſt, which will never give up its redeeming Power, till Sin and Sinners have no more a Name among the Creatures of God.—And if *long Ages* hereafter can only do that for a Soul, departing this Life, under a Load of Sins, which Days and Nights might have done for a moſt hardened *Pharaoh*, or a moſt wicked *Nero*, whilſt in the Body, it is becauſe, whilſt the Soul is in the Body, it has only the Nature and State of fallen Adam, but when Fleſh and Blood are taken from it the ſtrong apoſtate Nature of fallen Angels is found in it, which muſt have its State and Place in that Blackneſs of Darkneſs of a fiery Wrath, that burns in them and their Kingdom.

O poor Sinner, whoever thou art, repent and turn to God, whilſt thou haſt *Adam*'s Fleſh upon Thee; for as long as that laſts, the Kingdom of God is *nigh at hand*; but if thou dieſt without *Adam*'s Repentance, black Lakes, bottomleſs Pits, Ages of a gnawing Worm, and Fire that never ceaſes to burn, will ſtand between Thee and a Kingdom of Heaven afar off.

To prevent all this, and make Thee a Child of the firſt Reſurrection, Jeſus Chriſt, God and Man, the only begotten Son of this infinite Love, came into the World in the Name, and under the Character of infinite *Pity*, boundleſs *Compaſſion*, inexpreſſible *Meekneſs*, bleeding *Love*, nameleſs *Humility*, never ending *Patience*, *long ſuffering*, and Bowels of redeeming *Mercy*, called the Lamb of God, who with all theſe ſupernatural Virtues taketh away the Sins of the World.

Now from this View of God's infinite Love and Mercy in Chriſt Jeſus, willing nothing, ſeeking nothing through all the Regions of his Providence, but that Sinners of all Kinds, the boldeſt Rebels againſt all his Goodneſs, may have their *proper* Remedy, their *neceſſary* Means of being fully delivered from all that *Hurt*, *Miſchief* and *Deſtruction*, which, in full Oppoſition to their God and Creator, they had brought upon themſelves from this View, I ſay, of God and Chriſt,

uſing

uſing every Miracle of Love and Wiſdom to give recovery of Life, Health, and Salvation to all that have rebelled againſt them, look at the *murdering Monſter* of WAR. And what can its Name, or Nature be but a *fiery great Dragon*, a full Figure of Satan broke looſe, and fighting againſt every *redeeming Virtue* of the Lamb of God?

The temporal Miſeries and Wrongs which War carries along with it, wherever it goes, are neither to be numbered or expreſſed.—What Thievery bears any Proportion to that, which with the boldneſs of Drum and Trumpet plunders the innocent of all that they have? And if themſelves are left alive with all their Limbs, or their Daughters unraviſhed, they have many Times only the Aſhes of their conſumed Houſes to lye down upon.—What Honour has War not gotten from its Tens and Tens of Hundreds of Thouſands of Men Slaughtered on Heaps, with as little Regret or Concern, as at Loads of Rubbiſh thrown into a Pit?—Who but the fiery Dragon, would put Wreaths of Laurel on ſuch Heroes Heads? Who but He could ſay unto them, *Well done, good and faithful Servants?*

But there is ſtill an Evil of War much greater, though leſs regarded.—Who reflects how many Hundreds of Thouſands, nay Millions of *young Men*, born into this World for

no other End, but that they may be Born again of Chriſt, and from Sons of Adam's Miſery become Sons of God, and fellow Heirs with Chriſt in everlaſting Glory; who reflects, I ſay, what nameleſs Numbers of theſe are robbed of God's precious Gift of Life to them, before they have known the one ſole Benefit of Living; who are not ſuffered to ſtay in this World, till Age and Experience have done their beſt for them, have helped them to know the inward Voice and Operation of God's Spirit, helped them to find, and feel that *evil*, *Curſe*, and *Sting* of Sin and Death, which muſt be taken from within them, before they can die the Death of the Righteous; but inſtead of all this, have been either violently forced, or tempted in the Fire of Youth, and full ſtrength of ſinful Luſts, to forget God, Eternity, and their owns Souls, and ruſh into a *kill* or be *killed*, with as much furious haſte, and *goodneſs* of Spirit, as *Tyger* kills *Tyger* for the ſake of his Prey?

That God's Providence over his fallen Creatures is nothing elſe but a Providence of Love and Salvation, turning through Ways of infinite Wiſdom, ſooner or later, all kinds of Evil into a *new Good*, making that which was loſt to be found, that which was dead to be alive again; not willing that one ſingle Sinner ſhould want *That* which can ſave him from

from eternal Death, is a Truth as certain, as that God's Name is, I AM that I AM.

Among unfallen Creatures in Heaven, God's Name and Nature is LOVE, LIGHT, and GLORY.—To the fallen Sons of Adam, that which was *Love*, *Light*, and *Glory* in Heaven, becomes infinite PITY and COMPASSION on Earth, in a God cloathed with the Nature of his fallen Creature, bearing all its Infirmities, entering into all its Troubles, and in the meek Innocence of a Lamb of God living a Life, and dying a Death, of all the Sufferings due to Sin.—Hence it was, that when this DIVINE PITY ſuffered its own life-giving Blood to be poured on the Ground, all outward Nature made full Declaration of its atoning and redeeming Power; the Strength of the Earth did Quake, the Hardneſs of Rocks was forced to Split, and long covered Graves to give up their Dead.—A certain Preſage, that all *that* came by the *Curſe* into Nature and Creature muſt give up its Power; that all Kinds of helliſh *Wrath*, hardened *Malice*, fiery *Pride*, ſelfiſh *Wills*, tormenting *Envy*, and earthly *Paſſions*, which kept Men under the Power of Satan, muſt have their Fullneſs of Death, and Fullneſs of a new Life, from that all-powerful, all-purifying Blood of the Lamb, which will never ceaſe waſhing RED into WHITE, till the Earth is waſhed into the Cryſtal

Purity of *that Glaſſey Sea* which is before the Throne of God, and all the Sons of Adam cloathed in *ſuch White*, as fits them for their ſeveral Manſions in their Heavenly Father's Houſe.

Sing, O ye Heavens, and Shout all ye lower Parts of the Earth, for this is OUR GOD that varies not, whoſe firſt *creating Love* knows no Change, but into a *redeeming Pity* towards all his fallen Creatures.

Look now at *Warring Chriſtendom*, what ſmalleſt Drop of Pity towards Sinners is to be found in it? Or how could a Spirit all Helliſh more fully contrive and haſten their Deſtruction? It ſtirs up and kindles every Paſſion of fallen Nature that is contrary to the all-humble, all-meek, all-loving, all-forgiving, all-ſaving Spirit of Chriſt.--It unites, it drives, and compels nameleſs Numbers of unconverted Sinners to fall, Murdering and Murdered among Flaſhes of Fire, with the Wrath and Swiftneſs of Lightning, into a Fire infinitely worſe than that in which they Died. ——O ſad Subject for Thankſgiving Days. whether in Popiſh or Proteſtant Churches! For if there is a Joy of all the Angels in Heaven for *one Sinner* that repents, what a Joy muſt there be in Hell over ſuch Multitudes of Sinners, not ſuffered to repent? And if they who have *converted many to Righteouſneſs ſhall Shine as the Stars in the Firmament*

Firmament for ever, what *Chorazins Woe* may they not juſtly fear, whoſe proud Wrath and vain Glory have robbed ſuch numberleſs Troops of poor Wretches of all Time and Place, of knowing what Righteouſneſs they wanted for the Salvation of their immortal Souls.

Here my Pen trembles in my Hand; but when, O when will one ſingle Chriſtian Church, People, or Language, tremble at the Share they have in this Death of Sinners!

For the GLORY OF HIS MAJESTIES ARMS, ſaid once a *Moſt Chriſtian* King: Now if at that Time, his Catholick Church had called a ſolemn Aſſembly to unite Hearts and Voices in this pious Prayer, "O bleſſed "Jeſus, dear redeeming Lamb of God, "who cameſt down from Heaven, to ſave "Mens Lives, and not deſtroy them, go "along, we humbly pray Thee, with our "Bomb-Veſſels and Fire-Ships, ſuffer not "our thundering Cannon to roar in Vain, "but let thy tender Hand of Love and "Mercy direct *their* Balls to more Heads "and Hearts of thine own redeemed Crea-"tures, than the poor Skill of Man is able "of itſelf to do:"—Had not ſuch Prayers had more of the *Man of the Earth*, more of the *Son of Perdition* in them, than the Moſt Chriſtian King's glorying in his Arms?

Again,

Again, would you farther ſee the Fall of the Univerſal Church from being led by the Spirit of Chriſt, to be guided by the Inſpiration of the *great fiery Dragon*, look at all *European Chriſtendom* ſailing round the Globe with Fire and Sword, and every murdering Art of War, to ſeize the Poſſeſſions, and kill the Inhabitants of *both the Indies*.—What natural Right of Man, what ſupernatural Virtue which Chriſt brought down from Heaven, was not here trodden under Foot? All that you ever read or heard of Heathen Barbarity, was here outdone by Chriſtian Conquerors. And to this Day, what Wars of Chriſtians againſt Chriſtians, blended with *Scalping* Heathens, ſtill keep ſtaining the *Earth* and the *Seas* with human Blood, for a miſerable Share in the Spoils of a plundered Heathen World! A World, which ſhould have heard, or ſeen, or felt nothing from the Followers of Chriſt, but a divine Love, that had forced them from diſtant Lands, and through the Perils of long Seas, to viſit Strangers with thoſe glad Tidings of Peace and Salvation to all the World, which Angels from Heaven, and Shepherds on Earth, proclaimed at the Birth of Chriſt.

Here now, let the *Wiſdom of this World* be as Wiſe as ever it will, and from its learned Throne condemn all this as *Enthuſiaſm*; it need be no Trouble to any one, to be condemned by that Wiſdom which God himſelf

ſelf has condemned *as Fooliſhneſs with Him.* For the Wiſdom of this World has all the Contrariety to *Salvation-Wiſdom*, that the Fleſh has to the Spirit, Earth to Heaven, or Damnation to Salvation. It is a Wiſdom, whoſe Spirit and Breath keep all the Evil that is in fallen Man alive, and which in its higheſt Excellence has only the full grown Nature of that *carnal Mind, which is Enmity againſt God.*—It is a Wiſdom that is Senſual, and Deviliſh, that hinders Man from knowing, and dying all thoſe Deaths, without which there can be no new Life.——It is a Wiſdom that turns all Salvation-Truths into empty learned Tales, that inſtead of helping the Sinner to confeſs his Sins, *and feel the Miſery* that is hid under them, helps him to an Art of hiding, nay of defending them. For that which the Luſts and Paſſions do contrary to the Wiſdom from above, is proved to be *right Reaſon* by this Wiſdom from below, whoſe greateſt Skill is ſhewn, in keeping all the Powers and Paſſions of the *Natural Man* in Peace and Proſperity; and ſo the poor blinded Sinner lives and dyes in a total Ignorance of all that Light, Bleſſing, and Salvation, which could only be had by a broken and contrite Heart.—For (N. B.) with Reſpect to Conſcience, this is the chief Office of Worldly Wiſdom; it is to keep all Things quiet in the *Old Man*, that whether buſied

buſied in Things ſpiritual, or temporal, he may keep up the Luſts of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, without any Diſturbance from Religious Phantoms, and Dreams of myſtic Idiots, who for want of ſober Senſe and ſound Learning, think that Chriſt *really meant* what he ſaid in theſe Words, *Except a Man be born again of the Spirit, or from above, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*—For *this Wiſdom*, come to his higheſt perfection, is a *Claſſic Moral Painter*, which though it cannot alter the *Nature*, yet can change the *Colours* of every Thing; it can give to the moſt heavenly Virtue ſuch an outward Form and Colour, as will force the Stouteſt of *aged and learned Men* to run away from it; and to a Vice of the greateſt Deformity it can pencil ſuch charming Features, as will make every *Child* of this World wiſh to live and die with it.—Its *next Perfection* is that of a *flattering Orator*, who has Praiſe and Diſpraiſe at his own *free* Diſpoſal; for as they are all of his *own making*, ſo he can diſpoſe them on *whom*, and on *what* he will; not only as *outward intereſting* Occaſions call for them, but alſo as the *inward* Neceſſities, the *Ups* and *Downs* of his own poor *Self* want them. For *Self* however willing to be always ſtrong, has its weak Hours, and would be ever tottering, unleſs this *Elbow-Orator* kept him

him every Day (though perhaps not every Night) free from the disturbing Whispers of a Seed of God in his Soul.—Now join (if you please) *Learning* and *Religion* to act in fellowship with this worldly Wisdom, and make their best of it, and then you will have a Depravity of Craft and Subtility, as high as Flesh and Blood can carry it, which will bring forth a glittering *Pharisee*, with a hardness of Heart greater than that of the Sinner *Publican*.

Demas, says St Paul, *hath forsaken me, having loved this present World*.—Here you see all the Good and Blessing that is *inseparable* from the Wisdom of this World, it always does the same Thing, and has the same Effect wherever it is; it will do to high and low, learned or unlearned, Clergy or Laiety, that same unavoidably which it did to *Demas*; it will make them forsake Christ, turn their Backs on every Grace and Virtue of his Holy Spirit, as certainly as the Love of the World made *Demas* to forsake *Paul*.

This Wisdom has asked me, how is it possible for Christian Kingdoms in the Neighbourhood of one another to preserve themselves, unless the Strength and Weapons of War are every ones Defence against such Invasions, Incroachments, and Robberies, as would otherwise be the Fate of Christian Kingdoms from one another.

This Queſtion is ſo far from needing to be anſwered *by me*, that it is wholly on *my Side*; it confeſſes all, and proves all that I have ſaid of the fallen State of Chriſtendom to be ſtrictly true.—For if this is the governing Spirit of Chriſtian Kingdoms, that no one of them can ſubſiſt in Safety from its neighbouring Chriſtian Kingdoms, but by its Weapons of War, are not all Chriſtian Kingdoms equally in the ſame *unchriſtian* State, as two neighbouring *bloody Knaves*, who cannot be ſafe from one another, but as each others murdering Arms preſerve and protect them? This Plea therefore for Chriſtendom's Wars, proves nothing elſe but the want of Chriſtianity all over the Chriſtian World, and ſtands upon no better a Foundation of Righteouſneſs and Goodneſs, than when one Murdering Knave kills another that would have killed him.

But to know whether Chriſtianity wants, or admits of War, Chriſtianity is to be conſidered as in its right State.—Now the true State of the World turned Chriſtian, is thus deſcribed by the great Goſpel-Prophet, who ſhewed what a Change it was to make in the fallen State of the World.—It ſhall come to paſs, ſays he, *in the laſt Days*, that is, in the Days of Chriſtendom, *that the Mountain of the Lord's Houſe* (his Chriſtian Kingdom) *ſhall be eſtabliſhed in the Top of the Mountains, and all*

all Nations ſhall flow into it; and many People ſhall ſay, Let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord's Houſe, and he will teach us of his Ways, and we will walk in his Paths. Iſaiah ii. 2.

Now what follows from this going up of the Nations to the Mountain of the Lord's Houſe, from his teaching them of his Ways, and their walking in his Paths? The holy Prophet expreſsly tells you in his following Words, *They ſhall beat their Swords into Plow-Shares, and their Spears into pruning Hooks: Nation ſhall not lift up its Sword againſt Nation,* (N. B.) *neither ſhall they learn War any more.*—This is the Prophet's true Chriſtendom, with one and the ſame eſſential divine Mark ſet upon it, as when the Lamb of God ſaid, *By this* ſhall all Men *know* that ye are my Diſciples, *if ye Love one another as I have loved you.*—Chriſt's Kingdom of God is no where come, but where the Works of the Devil are deſtroyed, and Men are turned from the Power of Satan unto God.—God is only another Name for the higheſt and only Good; and the higheſt and only Good means nothing elſe but LOVE with all its WORKS.——Satan is only another Name for the *Whole* and *all* of Evil, and the whole of Evil is nothing elſe but its whole *Contrariety* to Love.——And the Sum Total of all *Contrariety* to Love is contained in Pride, Wrath, Strife, Self, Envy, Hatred, Revenge, Miſchief, and Murder. Look at theſe, with all

all their Fruits that belong to them, and then you ſee all the *princely Power* that Satan is, and has in this fallen World.

Would you ſee when and where the Kingdoms of this fallen World are become a Kingdom of God, the Goſpel Prophet tells you, that it is *then* and *there* where all Enmity ceaſes.—*The Wolf*, ſays he, *ſhall dwell with the Lamb, and the Leopard ſhall lye down with the Kid. The Calf and the young Lion and the Fatling together, and a little Child ſhall lead them. The Cow and the Bear ſhall feed, and their young ones ſhall lye down together, and the Lion ſhall eat Straw like the Ox. The ſucking Child ſhall play on the Hole of the Aſp, and the weaned Child ſhall put his Hand on the Cockatrice's Den.*——For, (N. B.) *they ſhall not* HURT or DESTROY *in all my holy Mountain*, that is, through all holy Chriſtendom. *Iſaiah* xi. 6.

See here a Kingdom of God on the Earth; it is nothing elſe but a Kingdom of mere Love, where all HURT and DESTROYING is done away, and every Work of Enmity changed into one united Power of Heavenly Love.—But obſerve again and again, whence this comes to paſs, that God's Kingdom on Earth is, and can be nothing elſe but the Power of reigning Love; the Prophet tells you, it is becauſe in the Day of his Kingdom, *the Earth ſhall be full of the Knowledge of*

of the Lord, as the Waters, cover the Sea.—— Therefore, O Chriſtendom, thy *Wars* are thy certain *Proof*, that thou art all over as full of an Ignorance of God, as the Waters cover the Sea.

As to the preſent fallen State of univerſal Chriſtendom, working under the Spirit and Power of the great fiery Dragon, it is not my Intention, in any Thing I am here upon, to ſhew how any Part of it can ſubſiſt, or preſerve itſelf from being devoured by every other Part, but by its own Dragon Weapons.

But the Chriſtendom which I mean, that neither wants, nor allows of War, is only that where Chriſt is King, and his holy Spirit the only Governor of the Wills, Affections, and Deſigns of all that belong to it.—It is my Complaint againſt, and Charge upon all the Nations of Chriſtendom, that this Neceſſity of murdering Arms is the Dragon's *Monſter*, that is equally brought forth by all and every Part of fallen Chriſtendom; and that therefore all and every Part, as well Popiſh as Proteſtant, are at one and the ſame Diſtance from the Spirit of their Lord and Saviour the Lamb of God, and therefore all want one and the ſame entire Reformation.

In theſe laſt Ages of fallen Chriſtendom many Reformations have taken Place; but alas! Truth muſt be forced to ſay, that they

have been, in all their Variety, little better than ſo many run-away Births of one and the ſame Mother, ſo many leſſer *Babels* come out of *Babylon* the great.—For among all the Reformers, the one only true Reformation that has never yet been thought of.——A Change of Place, of Governors, of Opinions together with new formed outward Models, is all the Reformation that has yet been attempted,

The *Wiſdom* of this World, with its worldly Spirit, was the only Thing that had overcome the Church, and had carried it into Captivity. For in Captivity it certainly is, as ſoon as it is turned into a Kingdom of this World; and a Kingdom of this World it certainly is, as ſoon as worldly Wiſdom has it's Power in it.—Not a falſe Doctrine, not a bad Diſcipline, not an uſurped Power, or corrupt Practice ever has prevailed, or does prevail in the Church, but has had its whole Birth and Growth from worldly Wiſdom.

This Wiſdom was the great evil Root, at which the reforming Axe ſhould have been laid, and muſt be laid, before the Church can be again that Virgin Spouſe of Chriſt, which it was at the Beginning.—*If any Man*, ſays St *Paul*, *will be wiſe, let him become a Fool in this World.* This admits of no Exception, it is a Maxim as univerſal and unalterable, as that which ſays, *If any Man will*

will follow Chriſt, let him deny himſelf—For no Man has any more to deny than that, which the Wiſdom and Spirit of this World are, and do in him. For all that is in this World, the *Luſts* of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eye, and the Pride of Life are the very Things in which alone the Wiſdom of this World lives, and moves, and has its being. It can be no other, can riſe no higher, nor be any better than they are and do.—For as heavenly Wiſdom is the Whole of all heavenly Goodneſs, ſo earthly Wiſdom has the whole Evil of all the earthly Nature.

St *Paul* ſpeaks of a *natural Man, that cannot know the Things of God, but to whom they are mere Fooliſhneſs.* This *natural Man* is only another Name for the Wiſdom of this World; but though he cannot know the Things that be of God, yet he can know their *Names*, and learn to ſpeak that which the Saints of God have ſpoken about them. —He can make Profeſſion of them, be eloquent in their Praiſe, and ſet them forth in ſuch a deſirable View, as ſhall make them quite agreeable to the Children of worldly Wiſdom.—This is the natural Man, who having got into the Church, and Church Power, has turned the Things of God into Things of this World.—Had this Man been kept out of the Church, the Church had kept its firſt Purity to this Day; for its fallen

State is nothing elſe but its Fall into the Hands of the natural Man of this World.—And when this is the State of the Church, the Wiſdom of this World (which always loves its own) will be in Love with it, will ſpare no Coſt to maintain it, will make Laws, fight Battles in Defence of it, and condemn every Man as Heretical, who dares ſpeak a Word againſt this *Glorious Image* of a Church, which the Wiſdom of this World has ſet up.

This is the great Antichriſt, which is neither better nor worſe, nor any Thing elſe, but the Spirit of Satan working againſt Chriſt in the Strength and Subtilty of earthly Wiſdom.

If therefore you take any Thing to be Church-Reformation, but a full Departure from the Wiſdom of this World, or any Thing to be your Entrance into a Salvation-Church, but the *Nature, Spirit*, and *Works* of Chriſt become *living* in you, then, whether Papiſt or Proteſtant, Reformation or no Reformation, all will be juſt as much Good to you, as when a Sadducee turns Publican, or from a Publican becomes a Phariſee. —For the Church of Chriſt, as it is the *Door* of Salvation, is nothing elſe but Chriſt himſelf.—Chriſt in us, or we in his Church, is the ſame Thing. When that is *alive, Wills, and Works* in you, which was alive in Chriſt, then you are in his Church; for that which he

he was, that muſt they be who are his. Without this, it matters not what *Pale* you are in. To every Thing but the new Creature, Chriſt ſays, *I know you not*; and to every Virtue that worldly Wiſdom puts on, *Get thee behind me Satan, for thou ſavoureſt not the Things that be of God.* And the Reaſon why it muſt be thus, why worldly Wiſdom though under a Religious Form, is and can be nothing elſe, but that which is called Satan, or Antichriſt, is becauſe all that we are and have from this World, is that very enmity againſt God, that whole Evil which ſeparates us from him, and conſtitutes all that Death and Damnation that belongs to our fallen State.—And ſo ſure as the Life of this World is our Separation from God, ſo ſure is it, that a total Departure from every Subtilty and Proſperity of worldly Wiſdom is abſolutely neceſſary, to change an evil Son of Adam into a holy Son of God.—And here it is well to be obſerved, that the Church of Chriſt is ſolely for this End, to make us Holy as he is Holy. But nothing can do this, but that which has full Power to change a Sinner into a Saint. And he who has not found *that Power* in the Church, may be aſſured that he is not yet a true Son of that Church. For the Church brings forth no other Births, but holy Children of God; it has no other End, no other Nature, or Work,

but that of changing a Sinner into a Saint.—But this can only be done, juſt as the change of Night into Day is done, or as the Darkneſs is quite loſt in the Light.—Something as contrary to the whole Nature of Sin, as Light is to Darkneſs, and as powerful over it, as the Light is powerful over Darkneſs, can alone do this.—Creeds, Canons, Articles of Religion, ſtately Churches, learned Prieſts, Singing, Preaching, and Praying in the beſt contrived Form of Words, can no more raiſe a dead Sinner into a living Saint, than a *fine Syſtem* of Light and Colours can change the Night into Day. For, (N. B.) That which cannot help you to *all* Goodenſs, cannot help you to *any* Goodneſs, nor can that take away *any* Sin, but that which can take away *all* Sin.

On this Ground it is that the Apoſtle ſaid, *Circumciſion is nothing, and Uncircumciſion is nothing*; and on the ſame Ground it muſt be ſaid, that *Popery* is nothing, and *Proteſtantiſm* is nothing, becauſe all is nothing, as to Salvation, but a Sinner changed into a Saint, or the Apoſtle's new Creature.—Call nothing therefore your Holy, Salvation-Church, but that which takes away all your Sins; this is the only Way not to be deceived with the Cry about Churches, Reformations, and Diviſions.—If it be aſked, What is meant by taking away all our Sins? The whole is fully told

told us in these Words, *To as many as believed, to them He gave Power to become Sons of God.* This is the true taking away, or Forgiveness of Sins; not a strong Imagination, or Brain-Fansy, that on such an Hour, on such a Day, or in such a Place, you felt and knew assuredly that all your Sins were forgiven you: By such a Forgiveness of Sins, *That* which made you a Sinner is not *destroyed*, but you will have every Day the same Necessity of confessing yourself a *miserable Sinner*, as you had that *Morning*, when your Sins were not forgiven you till the *Afternoon*. —The true Forgiveness of Sins is only then, when *That* which Sinned in us is done away, or become Powerless in us; but nothing can do this, but *That Power* by which we become Sons of God.—A blind Man has then only a Deliverance from his Blindness, when he is put in full Possession of seeing Eyes; this is the only doing away of his Darkness.—Just so, and no otherwise, are our Sins forgiven us, or done away, when the Power by which we become Sons of God, or the new Creature, is so given to us, so possessed by us, as seeing Eyes are given to and possessed by the Man who before that was all Blindness.—And as our *Old Man* can only then be said to be truly *put off*, when the *New Man* in Christ is raised to Life in his Stead, so our Sins are only then truly blotted out, or done away,

when an unſinning Nature, or a Birth of God that Sinneth not is come to be the ruling Life in us.

Many are the *Marks*, which the learned have given us of the true Church; but be that as it will, no Man, whether Learned or Unlearned, can have any Mark or Proof of his own *true Church Memberſhip*, but his being dead unto all Sin, and alive unto all Righteouſneſs.—This cannot be more plainly told us, than in theſe Words of our Lord, *He that committeth Sin, is the Servant of Sin*; but ſurely that Servant of Sin cannot at the ſame Time be a living Member of Chriſt's Body, or that new Creature, who dwells in Chriſt, and Chriſt in him.—To ſuppoſe a Man born again from above, yet under a neceſſity of continuing to Sin, is as abſurd as to ſuppoſe, that the true Chriſtian is only to have ſo much of the Nature of Chriſt born in him, as is conſiſtent with as real a Power of Satan ſtill dwelling in him.—*If the Son*, ſays Chriſt, *ſhall make you free, then ye ſhall be free indeed.* What is this, but ſaying, if Chriſt be come to Life in you, then a true Freedom from all Neceſſity of Sinning is given to you. Now if this is hindred, and cannot come to paſs in the faithful Follower of Chriſt, it muſt be, becauſe both the Willing and Working of Chriſt in Man is too weak to overcome that, which the Devil wills

wills and works in him.—All this Abſurdity, and even Blaſphemy, is neceſſarily implied in that common Doctrine of Books and Pulpits, which teaches that the Chriſtian can never have done Sinning as long as he lives. ——Well therefore may Chriſtendom Sleep as ſecurely as it does, under the Power of Sin, without any Thought, Hope, or Deſire of doing God's Will on Earth, as it is done in heaven; without any concern at their not being Pure, as he who has called them is Pure, or Walking as he Walked.

The Scripture knows no Chriſtians but Saints, who in all Things Act as becometh Saints. But now if the Scripture Saint did not mean a Man that eſchewed *all Evil*, and was Holy in all his Converſation, Saint and no Saint would have only ſuch Difference, as one carnal Man will always have from another.——Preachers and Writers comfort the half Chriſtians with telling them, that God *requires not* a perfect, ſinleſs Obedience, but *accepts* the Sincerity of our weak Endeavours inſtead of it.——Here, if ever, the *Blind lead the Blind*.—For St Paul, comparing the Way of Salvation to a *Race*, ſays, *In a Race all run, but ONE obtaineth the Prize: So run that ye may obtain*.—Now if Paul had ſeeing Eyes, muſt not they be Blind who teach, that God accepts of all *that run* in the religious Race, *and requires*

not that any ſhould *obtain* the Prize.—How eaſy was it to ſee, that the Sincerity of our weak Endeavours was quite a different Thing from that, which alone is, and can be the *required* Perfection of our Lives. The firſt God accepts, that is, bears with. But why or how? Not becauſe he ſeeks or *requires* no more, but he bears with them, becauſe, though at a great Diſtance from, they are, or may be making towards that Perfection, or new Creature, which he *abſolutely requires*, which is the *Fullneſs of the Stature of Chriſt*, and is that which Paul ſays, is the ONE that obtains the Prize.

The ſame which Paul ſays, is ſaid by Chriſt in other Words, *Strive*, ſays he *to enter in at the ſtraight Gate.* Here our beſt Endeavours are called for, and therefore accepted by God, and yet at the ſame Time he adds, *that many ſhall ſtrive to enter in, but ſhall not be able.*—Why ſo, whence comes this? It is becauſe Chriſt himſelf is the *one Door* into Life.—Here the *Strivers* mentioned by Chriſt, and thoſe which St Paul calls *Runners* in a Race, are the very ſame Perſons; and Chriſt calling himſelf the *one Door* of Entrance, is the ſame Thing as when Paul ſays, that *one only* receives the Prize, and that one, which alone obtains the Prize, or that enters through the right Door, is that new Creature in whom Chriſt is truly

Born. For whether you consider Things Natural or Supernatural, Nothing but *Christ in us* can be *our Hope of Glory*.

The Pleader for Imperfection further supports himself by saying, No Man in the World, Christ excepted, was ever without Sin.——And so say I too; and with the Apostle I also add, *That if we say we have not Sinned, we make him a Lyar.*—But then it is as true to say, that we make *him a Lyar*, if we deny the Possibility of our ever been freed from a Necessity of Sinning. For the same Word of God says, *If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins*, and (N. B.) *to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness*,

But surely he that is left under a Necessity of Sinning as long as he lives, can no more be said to be cleansed from *all Unrighteousness*, than a Man who must be a *Cripple* to his dying Day can be said to be cured *of all his Lameness*.——What weaker Conclusion can well be made, than to infer, that because Christ was the only Man that was born and lived free from Sin, therefore no Man on Earth can be raised to a Freedom from Sinning; no better than concluding, that because the *Old Man* is every one's Birth from Adam, therefore there can be no such Thing as a *New Man*, created unto Righteousness through Christ Jesus, living and being all in all in him; no better Sense or Logic, than to say,

ſay, that becauſe our *Redeemer* could not find us any Thing elſe but *Sinners*, therefore he muſt of all Neceſſity leave us to be *Sinners*.

Of Chriſt it can only be ſaid, that he is *in himſelf* the true Vine; but of every Branch that is his, and grows in him, it muſt be as truly ſaid, that the Life and Spirit of the true Vine is the Life and Spirit of its Branches, and that as is the Vine, ſo are its Branches. —And here let it be well noted, that if the Branch has not the Life and Goodneſs of the Vine in it, it can only be, becauſe it is broken off from the Vine, and therefore a withered Branch, fit for the Fire.——But if the Branches abide in the Vine, then Chriſt ſays this glorious Thing of them, *Ye ſhall aſk what ye will, and it ſhall be done unto you.* John xv. 7.—The very ſame glorious Thing which he had before ſaid of himſelf, *Father, I thank Thee, that Thou haſt heard me*, and (N. B.) *I knew that thou heareſt me always.* John xi. 41.—Now ſay that this new Creature, who is in ſuch Union, Communion, and Power with God, becauſe Chriſt is in him, and he in Chriſt, as really as the Vine is in the Branches, and the Branches in the Vine, ſay that he muſt be a Servant of Sin, as long as he lives in this World, and then your Abſurdity will be as great, as if you had ſaid, that Chriſt in us muſt partake of our Corruption.

The

The ſober Divine, who abhors the Pride of Enthuſiaſts, for the Sake of Humility, ſays of himſelf and all Men, we are poor, blind, imperfect Creatures; all our natural Faculties are perverted, corrupted, and out of their right State; and therefore nothing that is perfect can come from us, or be done by us. Truth enough! And the very ſame Truth, as when the Apoſtle ſays, *The natural Man knoweth not the Things that be of God, He cannot know them, they are fooliſhneſs to him.* This is the Man that we all are by Nature. —But what Scripture ever ſpoke of, or required any perfect Works from this Man, any more than it requires the *Ethiopian* to change his Skin? Or what an inſtructed Divine muſt he be, who conſiders this old natural Man as the Chriſtian, and therefore rejects Chriſtian Perfection, becauſe this *Old Man* cannot attain to it? What greater Blindneſs, than to appeal to our fallen State, as a Proof of a Weakneſs and Corruption which we muſt have when we are redeemed from it? Is this any wiſer than ſaying, that Sin and Corruption muſt be there *where* Chriſt is, becauſe it is *there* where he is not?

Our Lord has ſaid this abſolute Truth, That unleſs we be born again from above, there is no poſſible Entrance into the Kingdom of God.—What this new Birth is in us, and what we get by it, is as expreſsly told

told us by his beloved Apoſtle, ſaying, *That which is born of God Sinneth not.*—This is as true and unalterable, as to ſay, That which is born of the Devil can do nothing elſe but add Sin to Sin. To what End do we pray, that *this Day we may fall into no Sin*, if no ſuch Day can be had? But if Sinning can be made to ceaſe in us for one Day, What can do this for us, but that which can do the ſame To-morrow? What Benefit in Praying, that *God's Will may be done on Earth, as it is in Heaven*, if the Earth as long as its laſts muſt have as many Sinners, as it has Men upon it? How vainly does *the Church* pray for the Baptiſed Perſon, *that he may have Power and Strength to have Victory, and to triumph againſt the Devil, the World, and the Fleſh*, if this victorious Triumph can never be obtained; if notwithſtanding this Baptiſm and Prayer, he muſt continue *committing* Sin, and ſo be a ſervant of Sin as long as he lives? What Senſe can there be in making a *Communion of Saints* to be an Article of our Creed, if at the ſame Time we are to believe that Chriſtians, as long as they live, muſt in *ſome Degree* or other *follow*, and be *led* by the Luſts of the Fleſh, the Luſt of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life?

Whence now comes all this Folly of Doctrines? It is becauſe the Church is no longer that Spiritual Houſe of God, in which nothing

is

is intended and ſought after but Spiritual Power and Spiritual Life, but is become a mere human Building, made up of worldly Power, worldly Learning, and worldly Proſperity in Goſpel Matters. And therefore all the Frailties, Follies, and Imperfections in human Nature muſt have as much Life in the Church, as is any other human Society. And the beſt Sons of ſuch a Church muſt be forced to plead ſuch Imperfections in the Members of it, as muſt be where the old fallen human Nature is ſtill alive.—And alive it there muſt be, and its Life defended, where the being *continually moved, and led* by the Spirit of God, is rejected as groſs Enthuſiaſm.—For nothing but a full Birth, and continual Breathing and Inſpiration of the Holy Spirit in the new born Creature, can be a Deliverance from all that which is Earthly, Senſual, and Deviliſh in our fallen Nature.—This New Creature, born again in Chriſt, of that ETERNAL WORD which created all Things in Heaven and on Earth, is both the *Rock* and *Church*, of which Chriſt ſays, *The Gates of Hell ſhall never prevail againſt it*.—For prevail they will, and muſt againſt every Thing, but the New Creature.—And every fallen Man, be he where he will, or who he will, is yet in his fallen State, and his whole Life is a mere *Egyptian* Bondage, and *Babylonian* Captivity, till the heavenly Church, or new Birth from above has taken him out of it.

See

See how St Paul ſets forth the Salvation-Church, as being nothing elſe, and doing nothing elſe, but merely as the Mother of this new Birth. *Know ye not*, ſays he, *that ſo many of us as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his Death? Therefore we are buried with him by Baptiſm into Death, that like as Chriſt was raiſed from the Dead by the Glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in Newneſs of Life.*—Here we have the one true Church infallibly deſcribed, and yet no other Church but *the New Creature.*—He goes on, *For if we have been planted together in the Likeneſs of his Death, we ſhall be alſo in the Likeneſs of his Reſurrection.*—Therefore to be in Chriſt, or in his Church, belongs to no one but becauſe the old Man is *put off*, and the New Creature riſen in Chriſt is *put on*—The ſame thing is ſaid again in theſe Words, *Knowing this, that our Old Man is crucifyed with Him, that the Body of Sin might be deſtroyed*, That (N. B.) HENCEFORTH *we ſhould not ſerve Sin*; therefore the true Church is no where but in the New Creature, that *henceforth* Sinneth not, nor is any longer a Servant to Sin.——Away then with all the tedious Volumes of Church *Unity*, Church *Power*, and Church *Salvation*. Aſk neither a Council of *Trent*, nor a Synod of *Dort*, nor an *Aſſembly* of Divines, for a Definition of the Church. The Apoſtle has given you, not a Definition, but the unchangeable Nature of it

it in these Words.—But now *being made free from Sin, and become Servants to God, ye have your Fruit unto Holiness, and the End everlasting Life.* Therefore to be in the true Salvation-Church, and to be in Christ that New Creature which Sinneth not, is strictly the same Thing.

What now is become of this true Church, or where must the Man go, who would fain be a living Member of it?—He need go no where; because wherever he is, *That* which is to save him, and *That* which he is to be saved from, is always with him.——SELF is all the Evil that he has, and God is all the Goodness that he ever can have; But *Self* is always with him, and God is always with him.—Death to Self is his only Entrance into the Church of Life, and Nothing but God can give Death to Self.——*Self* is an inward Life, and God is an inward Spirit of Life; therefore nothing kills *That* which must be killed in us, or quickens *That* which must come to Life in us, but the inward Work of God in the Soul, and the inward Work of the Soul in God.—This is that *Mystic* Religion, which, though it has nothing in it but that same *Spirit*, that same *Truth*, and that same *Life*, which always was, and always must be the Religion of all God's holy Angels and Saints in Heaven, is by the Wisdom of this World accounted to be Madness. As wisely done, as to reckon him mad, who says, that the Vanity of

Things Temporal cannot be or give Life to the Things that are Eternal; or that the *Circumcision* of the Flesh is but as poor a Thing as the *Whetting* the Knife, in Comparison of that inward mystic Circumcision of the Heart, which can only be done by *that WORD of God, which is Sharper than any two edged Sword, and pierces to the dividing asunder of the Soul and Spirit.* Heb. iv. 12.—Now fansy to yourself a *Rabbi-Doctor*, laughing at this Circumcision of the two edged Sword of God, as *Gospel Madness*, and then you see that very same Christian Orthodoxy, which at this Day condemns the inward working Life of God in the Soul as *Mystic Madness.*

Look at all that is outward, and all that you then see has no more of Salvation in it, than the Stars and Elements.—Look at all the good Works you can think of, they have no Goodness for you, but when the good Spirit of God is the Doer of them in you.—For all the outward Works of Religion may be done by the *natural Man*, he can observe all Church-Duties, stick close to Doctrines, and put on the Semblance of every outward Virtue; thus high he can go. But no Christian, till led and governed by the Spirit of God, can go any higher than this feigned, outward Formality of this natural Man; to which he can add nothing, but his own natural fleshly Zeal in the Defence of it. For all Zeal must be of this Kind, till it is the

Zeal

Zeal of That which is born of God, and calls every Creature only to that same new Birth from above.—*My little Children*, says St. Paul, *of whom I travail again in Birth, till Christ be formed in you.* This is the whole Labour of an Apostle to the End of the World. He has nothing to preach to Sinners, but the Absolute Necessity, the true Way, and the certain Means of being Born again from above.—But if dropping this one Thing only necessary, and only available, he becomes a disputing Reformer about Words and Opinions, and helps Christians to be zealously separated from one another, for the Sake of being saved by different Notions of Faith, Work, Justification, or Election, &c. he has forgot his Errand, and is become a blind Leader of all who are blind enough to follow him.—For all that is called *Faith, Works, Justification, Sanctification, or Election*, are only so many different Expressions of *That* which the *restored* divine Life is, and does in us, and have no Existence any where, or in any Thing but the New Creature.—And the Reason why every Thing that is, or can be good in us, or to us, is nothing else but this divine Birth from above, is because the divine Nature dead in Adam was his entire Loss of every divine Virtue, and his whole Fall under the Power of this World, the Flesh, and the Devil; and therefore the divine Nature, brought again to Life in Man, is his Faith, his Hope, his Prayer, his Works, his Justification, Sanc-

tification, Election, or Salvation.—And that ELECTION, which ſyſtematical Doctors have taken out of its Place, and built it into an abſolute irreverſible Decree of God, has no other Nature, no other Effect, or Power of Salvation, but that which equally belongs to our *Faith*, *Hope*, *Prayer*, *Love of God*, *and Love of our Neighbour*; and juſt ſo far as theſe divine Virtues are in us, juſt ſo far are we the *Elect of God*, which means nothing elſe but *the beloved of God*; and nothing makes us the beloved of God, but his own firſt Image and Likeneſs riſing up again in us.—Would you plainly know what is meant by being elected of God, the ſame is plainly meant as when the Scripture ſays, God *heareth thoſe only who call upon him*; or as he can only be *found by thoſe who ſeek him*; ſo he only elects Thoſe and That which elect him.—Again, *He that honoureth me, him will I honour*, ſays God: *He that loveth me*, ſays Chriſt, *ſhall be beloved of me and my Father*. This is the Myſtery of Election (N. B.) as it relates *to Salvation*.—At divers Times and in ſundry Manners, God may have, and has had his *choſen Veſſels* for particular Offices, Meſſages, and Appointments; but as to *Salvation* from our *fallen State*, every Son of Adam is his *choſen Veſſel*, and this as certainly, as that every Son of Adam has the *Seed of the Woman*, *the incorruptible Seed of the* WORD born along with him; and this is God's unchangeable univerſal Election, which chuſes, or wills the Salvation of all Men.—For the

Ground of all Union, Communion, or Love between God and the Creature, lies wholly in the *divine Nature*.—That which is divine in Man tends towards God, elects God; and God only and solely elects his own Birth, Nature, and Likeneſs in Man.—But ſeeing his own Birth, a Seed of his own divine Nature is in every Man, to ſuppoſe God by an arbitrary Power willing and decreeing its eternal Happineſs in ſome, and willing and decreeing its eternal Miſery in others, is a blaſphemous Abſurdity, and ſuppoſes a greater Injuſtice in God, than the wickedeſt Creatures can poſſibly commit againſt one another.

But Truth, to the eternal Praiſe and Glory of God, will eternally ſay, that his Love is as univerſal and unchangeable as his Being, that his *Mercy over all his Works* can no more ceaſe, than his Omnipotence can begin to grow weak. God's *Mark* of an univerſal Salvation ſet upon all Mankind, was firſt given in theſe Words, *The Seed of the Woman ſhall bruiſe the Head of the Serpent:* Therefore wherever the Serpent is, there his Head is to be bruiſed. This was God's infallible Aſſurance, or omnipotent Promiſe, that all that died in Adam ſhould have its firſt Birth of Glory again.—The eternal Son of God came into the World only for the Sake of this new Birth, to give God the Glory of reſtoring it to all the dead Sons of fallen Adam.—All the Myſteries of this incarnate, ſuffering, dying Son of God, all the Price that He paid for our Redemption, all the Waſhings that we have from

from his all-cleanſing Blood poured out for us; all the Life that we receive from eating his Fleſh, and drinking his Blood, have their infinite Value, their high Glory, and amazing Greatneſs in this, becauſe nothing leſs than theſe Supernatural Myſteries of a God-Man could raiſe that new Creature out of Adam's Death, which could be again a living Temple and deified Habitation of the Spirit of God.

That this new Birth of the Spirit, or the divine Life in Man, was the Truth, the Subſtance, and ſole End of his miraculous Myſteries, is plainly told us by Chriſt himſelf, who at the End of all his Proceſs on Earth, tells his Diſciples, what was to be the Bleſſed, and full *Effect* of it, namely, that the Holy Spirit, the Comforter (being now fully purchaſed for them) ſhould after his Aſcenſion come in the Stead of a Chriſt in the Fleſh.—*If I go not away*, ſays he, *the Comforter will not come, but if I go away, I will ſend Him unto you, and he ſhall guide you into all Truth.* Therefore all that Chriſt was, did, ſuffered, dying in the Fleſh, and aſcending into Heaven, was for this ſole End, to purchaſe for all his Followers a new Birth, new Life, and new Light, in and by the Spirit of God reſtored to them, and living in them, as their Support, Comforter, and Guide into all Truth.—And this was his, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALWAY, EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD.

FINIS.

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EXTRACT OF A

LETTER

FROM THE

Rev. Mr. WILLIAM LAW,

In ANSWER to one, requesting a Conversation on the SPIRITUAL LIFE.

AS to your intention of a visit here, I can say nothing to encourage it; and though my countenance would have no forbidding airs put on by myself, yet as old age has given me her own complexion, I might perhaps bear the blame of it. But my chief objection against a visit of this kind, is the reason which you give for it: *(viz.)* For my instructive conversation on the SPIRITUAL LIFE. An appointment for religious conversation, has a taking sound; and passeth for a sign of great progress in goodness. But with regard to myself, such a meeting would rather make me silent, than a speaker in it: first, because I hurt myself, and am only acting a part, if I speak to persons on SPIRITUAL matters, either sooner or further than the SPIRIT OF GOD (which bloweth when and where it listeth) would be resisted in me, if I held my

my tongue: secondly, because it is deluding the persons I speak to, and helping them to be content with an imaginary, false food, if, as a SPIRITUAL assistant, I speak to them of any thing, but that which is their own evil or their own good; for true edification arises only from such knowledge, and not from devout harangues on the SPIRITUAL LIFE in general, though set forth in the most enlivened words. The SPIRITUAL LIFE is nothing else but the working of the SPIRIT OF GOD within us; and, therefore, our own silence must be a great part of our preparation for it; and much speaking, or a delight in it, will be often no small hindrance of that good, which we can only have from hearing what the SPIRIT AND VOICE OF GOD speaketh within us. This is not enough known by religious persons; they rejoice in kindling a fire of their own, and delight too much in hearing their own voice, and so lose that inward unction from above, which alone can new-create their hearts. To speak with the tongues of men or angels on religious matters, is a much less thing, than to know how to stay the mind upon GOD, and abide with him in the closet of our hearts, observing, loving, adoring, and obeying his holy power within us.

Rhetorick

Rhetorick and fine language about the things of the SPIRIT, is a vainer babble than in other matters; and he that thinks to grow in true goodneſs by hearing or ſpeaking flanning words or ſtriking expreſſions, as is now much the way of the world, may have a great deal of talk, but will have but little of his "converſation in hea-"ven."

I have wrote very largely of the SPIRITUAL LIFE; and he that has read it and likes it, has of all men the leaſt reaſon to aſk me any queſtions or make any viſit on that ſubject.

He underſtands not my writings, nor the end of them, who does not ſee, that their whole drift is to call all Chriſtians to a GOD and CHRIST within them, as the only poſſible life, light, and power of all goodneſs they can ever have; and, therefore, they turn my readers as much from myſelf, as from any other "Lo here! or Lo there!"

I invite all people to "The marriage of "the LAMB," but no one to myſelf.

Your humble Servant,

W. L.

A

COLLECTION

OF

LETTERS.

LETTER I.

To the RIGHT REVEREND the Lord Biſhop of L——n, Dr. SH—CK.

My Lord,

IT is with great ſincerity of gratitude, that I humbly acknowledge the favour of your lordſhip's moſt kind and obliging letter.

As the matter I was upon ſeemed to me to be of the *greateſt importance to Chriſtianity*, and juſtly deſerving the attention of all *ſerious perſons*, I knew of nothing ſo likely to increaſe the number of *ſuch readers*, or make them forget their prejudices againſt the writer,

 that

than by the addition of your lordſhip's name to it, a name *ſo juſtly venerable* to much the greateſt and moſt worthy part of the whole *Engliſh church*.

I am conſcious that in my later writings I have raiſed a prejudice againſt me, by eſpouſing the writings of *Jacob Behmen*.

It was very eaſy for the world to find fault with me on that account. Matter of cenſure lies very open to the critical reader of his books; though the *true ground* of every doctrine and article of Chriſtian faith and practice is there *opened* in ſuch a raviſhing amazing depth, and clearneſs of truth and conviction, as had never been ſeen or thought of in *any age of the church*.

To regard him as a divinely inſpired writer will with many be proof enough of my being an enthuſiaſt. But I am fully aſſured, that if the moſt ſober and juſt enemy to enthuſiaſm had but patience to read him, till he in ſome degree underſtood *his ground and principles*, be he who he will, *Chriſtian or Deiſt*, he will find himſelf forced to think of him as I do, and that without adding either him to the number of the *apoſtles*, or his writings to the *ſacred canon*.

I am the leſs affected with any reproach, even from the learned world on this account, becauſe I think it is apparent enough, that from the beginning of the world *nothing extraordinary*

traordinary in the way of *inſtruction* ever came from God, but met with its chief oppoſition from that which was the reigning wiſdom and learning of the time.

The ground and reaſon why the *wiſe and prudent*, of every age, have leſs of diſpoſition and fitneſs to receive divine light and inſtruction than *babes* and *ſucklings*, lies in the nature of things, and will be always as true, as when Chriſt ſaid it of the doctrines which he himſelf preached to the world.

I could not forbear ſaying thus much to your lordſhip on this head, but ſhall now only add mine to the prayers of all good men among us, that it would pleaſe God to continue *that life*, which has been ſo manifeſtly ſerviceable in the moſt *trying times*, to the good of this part of the *Chriſtian church*.

I am, my lord,

With the moſt profound veneration,

And fulneſs of eſteem,

Your lordſhip's moſt dutiful,

Humble and obliged ſervant.

King's Cliffe,
June 30, 1757.

LETTER II.

To Mr. *J. L.*

My dear and moſt worthy Friend,

FOR ſo I muſt ſalute you, as having long dwelt in my heart under that idea, though perſonally unknown to me. I ſhall not trouble you with apologizing for this long ſilence, but ſpeak directly to the matters of yours concerning your difficulty to join in any *church communion*.

Religion, or church communion, is in its true nature both *external* and *internal*, which are thus united, and thus diſtinguiſhed; the one is the *outward ſign*, the other is the *inward truth* ſignified by it: the one never was, nor ever can be, in its true ſtate without the other.

The *inward truth*, or church, is *regeneration*, or the life, ſpirit, and power of Chriſt, quickened and brought to life in the ſoul.

The *outward ſign*, or church, is that outward *form*, or manner of life, that bears full witneſs to the truth of this regenerated life of Chriſt formed or revealed in the ſoul.

The

The *inward truth* gives forth its outward proper manifeſtations of itſelf, and theſe manifeſtations bring forth the true *outward church*, and make it to be *viſible* and *outwardly* known.

As thus, every thing in the inward life, and ſpirit, and will of Chriſt, when it becomes living, dwelling, and working in the ſpirit of our minds, or inward man, is the *inward church*, or kingdom of God, ſet up within us: and every thing in the *outward behaviour* and viſible converſation of Chriſt, whilſt dwelling among men, when practiſed and followed by us in the form and manner of our life, makes us the members of that *outward church* which he ſet up in this world.

Inwardly nothing lived in Chriſt but the ſole will of God, a perpetual regard to his glory, and one continual deſire of the ſalvation of all mankind. When this ſpirit is in us, then we are *inwardly* one with Chriſt, and united to God through him.

Outwardly Chriſt exerciſed every kind of love, kindneſs, and compaſſion to the ſouls and bodies of men; nothing was viſible in the outward form of his life but humility and lowlineſs of ſtate in every ſhape; a contented want, or rather total diſregard of all worldly riches, power, eaſe, or pleaſure: a conti-

nual meekneſs, gentleneſs, patience, and reſignation, not only to the will of God, but to the haughty powers of the world, to the perverſeneſs and contradiction of all the evil and malice of men, and all the hardſhips and troubles of human life: now this, and ſuch like *outward behaviour* of Chriſt, thus ſeparate from, and contrary to the ſpirit, wiſdom, and way of this world, was that very *outward church*, of which he willed all mankind to become viſible and living members—And whoever in the ſpirit of Chriſt lives in the *outward exerciſe* of theſe virtues, lives as to himſelf in the higheſt perfection of *church unity*, and is the true inward and outward Chriſtian.—He is all that he can be, he hath all that he can have, he doth all that he can do, and enjoyeth all that he can enjoy, as a member of Chriſt's body, or church in this world.

For as Chriſt was God and man, come down from heaven for no other end but fully to reſtore the union that was loſt betwixt God and man, ſo *church unity* is, and can be nothing elſe but the unity of this or that man, or number of men with God, through the *power* and *nature* of *Chriſt*. And therefore it muſt be the truth, and the whole truth, that nothing more is required, nor will any thing leſs be able, to make any one a true member of the *one church* of Chriſt, out of which there

is

is no salvation, and in which there is no condemnation, but only and solely his conformity to, and union with the inward spirit, and outward form of Christ's life and behaviour in this world.—This is *the one fold under one shepherd*; though the sheep are scattered, or feeding in vallies, or on mountains, ever so distant, or separate from one another.

On the other hand, not only every unreasonable, unjust action, be it done to whom it will, not only every unkind, proud, wrathful, scornful, disdainful inward thought, or outward behaviour to any person, but every *unreadiness* to do good of all kinds to all that we can; every *unwillingness* to rejoice with them that rejoice, and to weep with them that weep, and love our neighbour as ourselves; every *aversion* to be inwardly all love, and outwardly all meekness, gentleness, courtesy, and condescension in words and actions towards every creature, for whom Christ died, makes us *schismatics*, though we be ever so daily gathered together into one and the same place, joining in one and the same form of creeds, prayers, and praises offered to God, and is truly a *leaving* or *breaking* that *church unity*, which makes us one with Christ as our head, and unites us with men as the members of his body.

That the matter is thus; that the true *church unity* consists in our walking as Christ

walked, fully appears, as from many others, so from these plain words of our Lord himself: *Ye are not of this world, as I am not of this world, but I have chosen you out of the world.* Therefore to have that contrariety to the world which Christ had is the one necessary and full proof of our being his, of our belonging to him, and being one with him.

Again, *Abide in me, and I in you, if ye abide in me, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done to you. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch withered, &c. For without me ye can do nothing.*

Therefore the one true proof of our being living members of Christ's church on earth or only dead branches fit for the fire, is nothing else but our being, or not being, inwardly of that spirit, and outwardly of that behaviour, which Christ manifested to the world.

Again, *This is my commandment, that ye love one another as I have loved you, and by this shall all men know that ye are my disciples.*

Therefore the true and sufficient mark of our outward church membership is there only and fully outwardly known, and found in every man, where the outward form of Christ's loving behaviour to all men is outwardly seen and known to be in him. These and

and the like paſſages of Chriſt and his apoſtles (though quite overlooked by moſt modern defenders of the one church) are the only places that ſpeak home to the truth and reality of church unity.

It may now be reaſonably aſked, What is the *divine ſervice* or *worſhip* in this church? For every church muſt have its divine ſervice and worſhip, which is the life, ſtrength, and ſupport of it.

It is anſwered: *That no man can call Chriſt Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt.* Therefore nothing is, or can be a divine ſervice in that church which has Chriſt for its Lord, but what has the Holy Spirit for its beginner, doer and finiſher. For if it be certain that no one can own Chriſt as his Lord but by the Holy Spirit, then it muſt be equally certain, that no one can ſerve or worſhip God through Chriſt his Lord in any other way, help, power, or means, but ſo far as it is all done in and by the power of the ſame Holy Spirit. Whatſoever is born of the fleſh is fleſh; that is, whatſoever proceeds from, or is done by the natural powers of man, from his birth of fleſh and blood, is merely human, earthly, and corrupt, and can no more do any thing that is heavenly, or perform a ſervice or worſhip that is divine, than our preſent fleſh and blood can enter into the kingdom of heaven. Thus ſaith the apoſtle, *Ye are not in the fleſh, but in the*

the ſpirit, if ſo be the ſpirit of God dwelleth in you. Now if any man hath not the ſpirit of Chriſt he is none of his. And conſequent if not his, he can perform no divine ſervice to him. Nor can any worſhip ceaſe to be carnal, or become divine, but by its being all that it is, and doing all that it doth, by the power, and preſence of Chriſt dwelling in our ſouls, and helping us by his Holy Spirit to cry in truth and reality, Abba, Father.

The New Teſtament never calls us to do, or offer, or allows any thing to be done or offered to God, as a divine ſervice or worſhip, but what is done in the truth and reality of faith, of hope, of love, and obedience to God.

But through all the New Teſtament, no faith, no hope, no love is allowed to be true and godly, but only that faith, that hope, &c. which *ſolely* proceeds from, and is the fruit of the Holy Spirit living, dwelling and working in our whole heart and ſoul, and ſpirit.

This ſpirituality of the Chriſtian religion is the reaſon why it was firſt preached to the world under the name of the kingdom of God, becauſe under this new diſpenſation, freed from veils, ſhadows, and figures of good things, abſent or to come, God himſelf is manifeſted, ruling in us and over us, as an *eſſential light* of our lives, as an *indwelling word*

word of power, as a *life-giving* ſpirit within us, forming us by a new Birth to become a *choſen generation*, a *royal prieſthood*, to *offer ſpiritual ſacrifices to God, through a new and living way which Chriſt hath conſecrated for us.* The truth and perfection of which ſtate is plainly ſet forth by the following prayer of Chriſt, viz. *That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they alſo may be one in us, I in them and thou in me, that they be made perfect in one, and that the love wherewith thou haſt loved me, may be in them and I in them.* Now for the truth and certainty of this ſpiritual kingdom, in which are only ſpiritual worſhippers baptized from above into an union and communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, through the myſterious union of God and man in the one mediator Jeſus Chriſt: for the truth, I ſay, of this ſpiritual ſtate of Chriſtianity, we have the plaineſt words of Chriſt, expreſsly declaring that the *Jeruſalem ſervice*, and conſequently every thing or ſervice that *has the nature of it*, was to have its end in the eſtabliſhment of his church.

Believe me, ſaith he, *the hour cometh when ye ſhall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jeruſalem, worſhip the Father: But the hour cometh and now is, when the true worſhippers ſhall worſhip the Father in ſpirit and in truth: For the Father ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him.*

There-

Therefore it must be certain in the highest degree that Christ cannot, nor could set up any other kind of worship, or worshippers, but such as the Father seeketh; because he and his Father were one, both in will and work. And the reason and necessity of this kind of worship is added by Christ in the following words, *God is a spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth.*

Therefore if Christ had not *only* and *solely* set up this truth of spiritual worship, he had been but another *Moses*, and though a better teacher, yet still but as a *schoolmaster* to some higher state of religion, that was *yet wanted*, and *must be revealed*, if so be that man was to be restored to his true state of life, union, and happiness in and with the divine nature. For as God is a spirit, and our life is spiritual, so no religious worship can be in its true perfection, or bring us into the possession of our highest good, till it raises all that is spirit and life in us into union and communion with spirit and life in God.

If it should here be asked, How are we to become and continue worshippers of the Father in spirit and truth? It is answered; All consists in *turning inwards*, in attention to that which is daily and hourly stirring, living, and working in our hearts.

Now though the scripture no where gives

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this direction in these very words, yet since it is said in scripture, that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but in the temple of our hearts; since the kingdom of God is said to be within us, and not to come with outward observation, but to be in us as a secret living seed of the incorruptible word; since our heart is our whole life, and we are said to live, and move, and have our being in God, it is directly telling us that we are to *turn inwards*, if we would turn to and find God.

It is directly telling us, that in what manner we are within, as the worship is done there, so is God in such manner within us; and that he is no otherwise our God, our life, our rest and happiness, than so far as the working of our hearts is a willing and chusing, a hungering and thirsting to find, feel, and enjoy the life-giving power of his holy presence in our souls.

To be inwardly therefore attentive to God, shewing the good and the evil, distinguishing the light from the darkness in our own souls; to listen to the voice of his *ever speaking word*, and to watch the movings of his *ever sanctifying spirit* within us, waiting and longing in the spirit of prayer, of faith and hope, of love and resignation, to be inwardly quickened and revived in the image and according to the likeness of that Son, in whom he is well pleased,

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is the worſhipping of God with our whole heart and ſoul, in ſpirit and in truth.

It is living to God, in and through the power of Chriſt, as he lived; it is praying with him, and by his ſpirit, that continual prayer which he always had, whether ſpeaking to the multitude, or healing their diſeaſes, or alone by himſelf in the ſtillneſs of nights, and lonelineſs of mountains. For this inward prayer, in which the whole heart and ſoul and ſpirit loves, worſhips, and applies to a God, not abſent or diſtant, but to a Trinity of goodneſs and mercy, of light and love, of glory and majeſty, dwelling, and working within us, willing and deſiring to do all that in the temple of our hearts, which is done and is always doing in his own temple in heaven, is a prayer, that only needs outward words for the ſake of others; and of which it may be ſaid, as Chriſt ſaid: *Father, I knew that thou always heareſt me, but becauſe of the people which ſtand by, I ſaid it.*

I begin to apprehend, worthy Sir, that you will think I am gone too far about, and not come cloſe enough to the matter in hand. But I hope it is not ſo: I have gone through all that I have ſaid, only to ſhew that church unity or communion is not a matter that depends on any particular ſociety, or outward thing, but is compleat, or defective, in ſuch degree as we live in unity with, or contrariety

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to the inward ſpirit and outward example of Chriſt. For no union ſignifies any thing to us, or our ſalvation, but union with God through Chriſt, and nothing unites us to Chriſt, or makes us to be his, but his holy ſpirit dwelling, and working inwardly and outwardly in us, as it did in him.

This is the only church unity that concerns the conſcience, and when we are in this unity, we are in union with Chriſt, and with every one who is united to him, however diſtant or ſeparated from us by human incloſures.

I come now to conſider the church under another, and more common idea of it, namely, as external, and about which all the Chriſtian world is at enmity, ſtrife, and debate.

After Chriſtianity had been a few ages in the world, it became national, and obtained the protection and patronage of the princes of this world.

Hence it was enriched with many gifts and privileges, and ſtrengthened by powers, that were *foreign* to the nature of it; and churchmen, beginning to quarrel about Chriſtian doctrines, were ſupported in their ſtrife and diviſion from one another by the temporal powers under which they lived.

This ſtate of the church hath continued to this day, where almoſt every age hath multiplied the number of divided churches, brought

brought forth by the union of the civil and eccleſiaſtical power.

This ſtate therefore of external churches hath the nature of things *merely human*, and is ſubject to ſuch *alterations*, *changes*, and *corruptions*, as the forms and revolutions of temporal government all over the world. And therefore the private Chriſtian, who, as ſuch, is a member of a kingdom that is not of this world, has little or no concern in it.

Without entering into the merits of divided churches, which I ſhall not do here, or any where elſe; thus much I think may with truth be affirmed, that where the church and the ſtate are incorporated, and under one and the ſame power, all the evil paſſions, corrupt views, and worldly intereſts, which form and transform, turn and overturn all outward things, muſt be expected often to come to paſs, as well in the church as in the ſtate with which it is united.

But as private Chriſtians have no power, or call to govern the world, or ſet up thrones according to the principles of truth and righteouſneſs, but are by the ſpirit of the goſpel obliged to ſubmit to, and be contented with that ſtate of government, good or bad, under which the providence of God has placed them, ſo are they, in like manner, to exerciſe a patient ſubmiſſion and reſignation under ſuch an imperfect ſtate of the outward church, which pro-

providence has not prevented, and only to take care to be inwardly found ſuch worſhippers in ſpirit and in truth, as the Father ſeeketh.

I mean not by this, as ſome have done, that any evil, however great in the beginning, or continuing of uſurped power, either in the church or ſtate, loſes its evil nature, and may be called right and good, as ſoon as providence has ſuffered it to become ſucceſsful.

No, by no means. Succeſs, though always to be owned to have God's permiſſion, leaves all things in their own nature, neither good becauſe ſucceſsful, nor bad becauſe defeated and ſuppreſſed.

The wickedneſs of the Jews, conſpiring and effecting the death of Chriſt, was not only permitted, but ſuitable to the deſigns of providence in the redemption of mankind.—But that the evil nature of their wickedneſs did not loſe its guilt, becauſe ſuffered by God to be ſucceſsful, but ſtill continues, is plain from the curſe of God ſtill abiding upon it to this day.

The duty of private Chriſtians, with regard to providence in ſuch caſes, is not to call that good which before was evil, or that evil which before was good, but patiently to ſuffer, and humbly acquieſce under all that bad outward courſe of things, either in church or ſtate, which the providence of God has not thought

fit to prevent, and that for theſe reaſons; *Firſt*, as fully knowing, that all things muſt work together for good to thoſe who love God; *Secondly*, as piouſly believing, that in all ſucceſsful wickedneſs, whether of princes againſt their people, or of people againſt their princes, there is always *ſomething hid* under it, which, in its *way and degree*, will like the ſucceſsful wickedneſs of the Jews towards Chriſt help forward that ſalvation, for which Chriſt hath laid down his life.

Who can ſay what a good and bleſſing the Chriſtian world had been deprived of, had the righteous providence of God not permitted the princes of the heathen world to make ſuch blood-havock of the firſt Chriſtians.

But ſuppoſe errors of the following kind got into the church, *viz.* 1. The ſcripture baptiſm of the whole body under water only as it were mimicked, by ſcattering a few drops of water on a new-born child's face. 2. The ſupper of the Lord, in one church held to be bread and wine changed into the real fleſh and blood of Chriſt; in another as bread and wine, not changed into, but ſubſtantially united with the real fleſh and blood of Chriſt; in another mere bread and wine, only made memorials of the body and blood of Chriſt. In one church this, in another that form and manner of conſecration held to be eſſential; in another all prieſtly conſecration

cration rejected as rank superstition. 3. Suppose the original apostolical constitution of *church assemblies*, where all meet together, that all in their turns *might prophesy one by one, that all might learn, and all be comforted*, should in some churches be so changed, that all praying, speaking or prophesying, as from the power and presence of Christ among them, were quite prohibited; where one and the same long, tedious, humanly contrived form of worship is daily, from year's end to year's end, to be read by one who is become their only speaker and instructor, not because he alone is daily full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, but because he is either hired to that office, or because, by some means or other, the church and church-yard are become his freehold: Is not such a state of church assemblies in full contrariety to the first assemblies, and to the apostle's injunction; *quench not the spirit, despise not prophesyings?* 4. Suppose again, that in the settled service of the church certain prayers and petitions, not according to truth and righteousness, or suitable to the goodness of the evangelical spirit, are read, as prayers for success in unchristian wars, prayers for the destruction of our Christian brethren, called our enemies, thanksgivings for the violent slaughter and successful killing of mankind: when these are made parts of the church-service, are we

in obedience to the providence of God, suffering things in church-assemblies to come to this pass, to unite and bear a part in such church-service?

My answer to all this shall be only personal; that is, what I would do myself in these supposed cases.

First, As to any defects, mutilation, or variations in the outward form and performance of baptism and the supper of the Lord in the church, I am under little or no concern about them; and that for this very good reason,—Because all that is inwardly meant, taught, or intended by them, as the life, spirit, and full benefit of them, is subject to no human power, is wholly transacted between God and myself, and cannot be taken from me by any alteration made by man in the outward celebration of them.

If the church, in my baptism, should sprinkle a little milk, or wine, instead of water, upon my face, it would be no defective baptism to me, if I had all that inward disposition of repentance, of faith in Christ, to be born again of him, which was meant, figured, and implied, by such immersion into water, as was the first baptism.

The same may be said of the supper of the Lord, however altered, or varied in its outward manner from what it was at first, if the inward truth, pointed at by it, is in me, is loved

loved and adhered to by me, I have all the benefit that was meant, or could be had by it, when it was kept to a tittle in the same outward form in which the first church used it.

And therefore the outward celebration of these sacraments is reverenced by me, wherever they are observed, as standing in the same place, and significant of the same inward blessing, as in their first institution.

As to the forementioned supposed prayers, though I am at present where they are read in the church, I neither make, nor need I make them, any more my *own prayers*, than I make, or need to make all the curses in the Psalms, to be my *own curses*, when I hear both priest and people reading them in the church as a part of divine service. Nor is there any more hypocrisy, or insincerity, in one case than in the other.

I join therefore in the public assemblies, not because of the *purity* or *perfection* of that which is *done*, or to *be found* there, but because of that which is *meant*, and *intended* by them: they mean the holy public worship of God; they mean the edification of Christians; they are of great use to many people; they keep the world from a total forgetfulness of God: they help the ignorant and letterless to such a knowledge of God, and the scriptures, as they would not have without them.

And therefore, fallen as these church assemblies are from their first spiritual state, I reverence them, as the *venerable remains* of all that which once was, and will, I hope, be again the glory of church-assemblies, *viz.* the *ministration of the spirit, and not of the dead letter.*

And there are two very great signs of the near approach of this day, in two very numerous, yet very different kinds of people in these kingdoms.

In the one sort, an extraordinary increase of new separations, particularly of opinions, methods, and religious distinctions, is worked up to its utmost height. And we see them almost every day running with eagerness from one method to another, in quest of *something*, by the help of a new form, which they have not been able to find in the old one.

Now as the vanity and emptiness of any thing, or way, is then only fully discovered and felt, when it has run all its lengths, and worked itself up to its highest pitch, so that nothing remains untried to keep up the deceit; so when religious division, strife of opinions, invented forms, and all outward distinctions have done their utmost, have no farther that they can go, nor any thing more to try, then is their inevitable fall at hand; and if the zeal was *simple* and *upright*, all must end in this full conviction, *viz.* That vanity and

and emptineſs, burden and deceit, muſt follow us in every courſe we take, till we have done with all our own running, to expect all, and receive all, from the inviſible God dwelling in and bleſſing our hearts with all heavenly gifts, by a birth of his eternal all-creating word, and life-giving ſpirit brought forth in our ſouls.

The *other ſign* I mentioned is to be found in another kind of a much awakened people in moſt parts of theſe kingdoms, who in the midſt of the noiſe and multiplicity of all church-ſtrife, having heard the ſtill and ſecret voice of the true ſhepherd, are turned inwards, and wholly attentive to the inward truth, ſpirit, and life of religion, ſearching after the myſtical ſpiritual inſtruction, which leads them from the outward cry of a *Lo here, or there, is Chriſt*, to ſeek to him and his redeeming ſpirit within them, as the only ſafe guide from inward darkneſs to inward light, and from outward ſhadows into the ſubſtantial ever enduring truth; which truth is nothing elſe but the *everlaſting union of the ſoul with God, as its only good, through the ſpirit and nature of Chriſt truly formed and fully revealed in it*—But to go no farther; I ſhall only add, that as yet I know of no better way of thinking or acting than as above, with regard to the univerſal *fallen ſtate* of all

churches; for fallen they all are, as certainly as they are divided.

Every church-diſtinction is more or leſs in the corrupt ſtate of every *ſelfiſh, carnal, ſelf-willed, worldly-minded, partial* man, and is what it is, and acts as it acts, for its *own glory*, its *own* intereſt and advancement, by that ſame ſpirit, which keeps the ſelfiſh partial man ſolely attached to his *own* will, his *own* wiſdom, ſelf-regard and ſelf-ſeeking. And all that is wanting to be removed from every church, or Chriſtian ſociety, in order to its being a part of the heavenly *Jeruſalem*, is *that* which may be called its *own human will, carnal* wiſdom, and *ſelf-ſeeking* ſpirit; which is all to be given up by turning the eyes and hearts of all its members to an inward adoration, and total dependence upon the ſupernatural, inviſible, omnipreſent God of all ſpirits; to the inward teachings of Chriſt, as the power, the wiſdom and the light of God, working within them every good, and bleſſing, and purity, which they can ever receive, either on earth or in heaven.

Under this light, I am neither proteſtant, nor papiſt, according to the common acceptation of the words.—I cannot conſider myſelf as belonging only to one ſociety of Chriſtians, in ſeparation and diſtinction from all others.—It would be as hurtful to me, if not more

more so than any worldly partiality. And therefore as the defects, corruptions, and imperfections, which, some way or other, are to be found in all churches, hinder not my communion with that, under which my lot is fallen, so neither do they hinder my being in full union and hearty fellowship with all that is Christian, holy, and good, in every other church-division.

And as I know that God and Christ, and holy angels, stand thus disposed towards all that is good in all men, and in all churches, notwithstanding the mixture in them is like that of tares growing up with the wheat, so I am not afraid, but humbly desirous, of living and dying in this disposition towards them.

I am, worthy Sir,

With much truth of love and respect,

Your faithful friend,

And hearty servant.

Feb. 28, 1756.

LETTER

LETTER III.

To the Reverend Mr. *S.*

My dear Friend and Brother,

I HOPE my long ſilence has not occaſioned your being offended at me, or any ſuſpicion that I have diſregarded you, or the matter you wrote upon. If I was to offer at a reaſon in excuſe of it, it would be an invented one, for it has never been known to myſelf. But I was contented to know, that my heart was right towards you, full of all good-will and deſire to ſerve you in the way that God ſhould lead me to it. And ſo it is come to paſs, that you have not heard from me ſooner.

It is a great pleaſure to me to think (as you ſay) that my letter to you will alſo be to two of your brethren, who ſtand in the ſame ſtate of earneſtneſs to know how to be faithful and uſeful in their miniſtry, as you do: I hope God will increaſe your number.

The firſt buſineſs of a clergyman awakened by God into a ſenſibility, and love of the truths of the goſpel, and of making them equally

equally felt and loved by others, is thankfully, joyfully, and calmly to adhere to, and give way to the increaſe of this new-riſen light, and by true introverſion of his heart to God, as the ſole author of it, humbly to beg of him, that all that which he feels a deſire of doing to thoſe under his cure, may be firſt truly and fully done in himſelf.

Now the way to become more and more awakened, to feel more and more of this firſt conviction, or work of God within you, is not to reflect and reaſon yourſelf into a farther and deeper ſenſibility of it, by finding out arguments to ſtrengthen it in your mind. But the one true way is in faith and love to keep cloſe to the preſence and power of God, which has manifeſted itſelf within you, willingly reſigned to, and ſolely depending upon the one work of his all-creating word, and all-quickening ſpirit, which is always more or leſs powerful in us, according as we are more or leſs truſting to and depending upon it.

And thus it is, that by faith we are ſaved, becauſe God is always ours in ſuch proportion as we are his; as our faith is in him, ſuch are his power and preſence in us. What an error therefore to turn one thought from him, or caſt a look after any help but his; for if we aſk *all* of him, if we ſeek for *all* in him, if we knock only at his own door of mercy in

in Chriſt Jeſus, and patiently wait and abide there, God's kingdom muſt come, and his will muſt be done in us.

For God is always preſent, and always working towards the *life* of the ſoul, and its deliverance from captivity under fleſh and blood. But this inward work of God, though never ceaſing or altering, is yet always and only hindred by the activity of our own nature and faculties, by bad men through their obedience to earthly paſſions, and by good men through their ſtriving to be good in their own way, by their natural ſtrength, and a multiplicity of ſeemingly holy labours and contrivances.

Both theſe ſorts of people obſtruct the work of God upon their ſouls. For we can co-operate with God no other way than by ſubmitting to the work of God, and ſeeking and leaving ourſelves to it.

For the whole nature of the fallen ſoul conſiſts in its being fallen from God into itſelf, into a ſelf-government and activity under its own powers broken off from God, and therefore dying to ſelf, as well to our reaſon as our paſſions and deſires, is the firſt and indiſpenſible ſtep in Chriſtian redemption, and brings forth that converſion to God, by which Chriſt becomes formed and revealed in us. And nothing hinders this converſion from being fruitful in all good, and gaining

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all that we want from God, but the retaining *ſomething* to dwell in as *our own*, whether it be earthly ſatisfactions, or a righteouſneſs of human endeavours.

And therefore all the progreſs of your firſt conviction, which by the grace of God you have had from above, and from within, conſiſts in the ſimplicity of your faith, in adhering to it as ſolely the work of God in your ſoul, which can only go on in God's way, and can never ceaſe to go on in you, any more than God can ceaſe to be that which he is, but ſo far as it is ſtopped by your want of faith in it, or truſting to ſomething elſe along with it. God is found as ſoon as he alone is ſought; but to ſeek God alone is nothing elſe but the giving up ourſelves wholly unto him. For God is not abſent from us, in any other reſpect, than as the ſpirit of our mind is *turned* from him, and not left wholly to him.

This *ſpirit of faith*, which not here or there, or now and then, but every where, and in all things, looks up to God alone, truſts ſolely in him, depends abſolutely upon him, expects all from him, and does all it does for him, is the utmoſt perfection of piety in this life. The worſhip of God in *ſpirit* and *truth* can go no higher, it does that which is its duty to do; it hath all that it wants, it doth all that it wills, it is one power, one ſpirit, one will, and one working with God. And this

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is that union or oneneſs with God in which man was at firſt created, and to which he is again called, and will be fully reſtored by God and man being made one Chriſt.

Stephen was a man full of faith and the Holy Ghoſt. Theſe are always together, the one can never be without the other.

This was *Stephen*'s qualification for the deaconſhip, not becauſe of any thing high or peculiar in that office, but becauſe the goſpel-diſpenſation was the opening a kingdom of God among men, a ſpiritual theocracy, in which, as God and man fallen from God were united in Chriſt, ſo an union of immediate operation between God and man was reſtored. Hence this diſpenſation was called, in diſtinction from all that went before it in outward types, figures, and ſhadows, a *miniſtration of the ſpirit*, that is, an immediate operation of the ſpirit of God itſelf in man, in which nothing human, creaturely, or depending upon the power of man's wit, ability, or natural powers, had any place, but all things began in and under obedience to the ſpirit, and all were done in the power and ſtrength of faith united with God.

Therefore to be a faithful miniſter of this new covenant between God and man is to live by faith alone, to act only, and conſtantly under its power, to deſire no will, underſtanding, or ability as a labourer in Chriſt's vineyard,

vineyard, but what comes from faith, and full dependence upon God's immediate operation in and upon us.

This is that very thing which is expreſsly commanded by St. *Peter*, ſaying, *If any man ſpeak, let him ſpeak as the oracles of God*, if any *man miniſter, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth*. For all which he giveth this *reaſon*, which will be a reaſon as long as the world ſtandeth, *viz. That in all things God may be glorified through Jeſus Chriſt*. A plain and ſufficient declaration, that where this is not done, there God is not glorified by Chriſtians through Jeſus Chriſt.

God created men and angels ſolely for the *glory of his love*; and therefore angels and men can give no other glory to God, but that of yielding themſelves up to the work of his creating love manifeſting itſelf in the ſeveral powers of their natural life, ſo that the firſt creating love, which brought them into being, may go on creating, and working in them according to its own never-ceaſing will to communicate good for ever and ever. This is their living to the praiſe and glory of God, namely, by owning themſelves, in all that they are, and have, and do, to be mere inſtruments of his power, preſence and goodneſs in them and to them; which is all the glory they can return to their Creator, and all the glory for which he created them. We

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can no otherwiſe give religious glory to God than by worſhipping him in ſpirit and in truth, ſeeing Chriſt has ſaid, that *the Father ſeeketh ſuch to worſhip him.*

But we can no otherwiſe worſhip God in ſpirit and in truth, than as our ſpirit in truth and reality ſeeks only to, depends only upon, and in all things adores, the life-giving power of his univerſal ſpirit, as the *creator*, *upholder*, and *doer* of all that is or can *be good*, either in time or eternity. For nothing can be good but that which is according to the will of God, and nothing can be according to the will of God, but that which is done by his own ſpirit. This is unchangeable, whether in heaven or on earth. And this is the one end of all the diſpenſations of God, however various, towards fallen man, *viz.* to bring man into an union with God. Comply with all the outward modes and inſtitutions of religion, believe the letter, own the meaning of ſcripture-facts, ſymbols, figures, repreſentations, and doctrines, but if you ſtand in any other uſe of them, or ſeek to gain ſome other good from them, than that of being *led out of your own ſelf*, from your *own will* and *own ſpirit*, that the will of God, and the ſpirit of God, may do all that is willed and done by you, however fixed and ſteadily you may adhere to ſuch a religion, you ſtand as fixed and ſteadily in your own fallen ſtate. For the

the reſtoration of fallen man is nothing elſe but the reſtoration of him to his firſt ſtate, under the will and ſpirit of God, in and for which he was created.

You may here perhaps, my dear friend, think that I am ſpeaking too much at large, and not cloſely enough to the particular matter of your enquiry. But my intention hath been ſo to ſpeak to you on this occaſion, as to lay a ground for a proper behaviour under every circumſtance of the outward work of your miniſtry. All things muſt be ſet right in yourſelf firſt, before you can rightly aſſiſt others towards the attaining to the ſame ſtate.

I do not mean, that you muſt be firſt in a ſtate of perfection before you can be fitted to teach others. But I mean, that you muſt firſt ſee *in what* you place your own perfection, and have the *witneſs* in yourſelf of the truth of it, before you can rightly direct others in the way to it; otherwiſe your inſtruction would be of ſuch practical things, of which you had no practical knowledge.

For this reaſon I have ſaid all that is ſaid above, to help you to ſet out under a right ſenſe of all that which religion is to do for yourſelf, and why, and how, and by what means alone it can be done in you. When theſe two things are not notionally, but practically known and adhered to, then are you

enabled, according to your measure, to speak of things and truths of religion, to those that are ignorant or insensible of them.

Hence you may learn what you are chiefly to drive at in all your discourses from the pulpit and conversation; namely, to turn the attention of men to a power of good, and a power of evil, both of them born and living within them. For in these two things, or states of the soul of every man, lies the full proof of the whole nature, both of the fall and redemption from it.

Were we not naturally evil, by a birth of evil essentially born and living in us, we should want no redemption; and had we not a birth of *something divine* in us, we could not be redeemed. Inward evil can only be cured or overcome by an inward good.

And therefore as all our salvation is an inward work, or struggle of two births within us, so all the work of your outward instruction must be to call every one home to himself, and help every heart to know its own state, to seek, and find, and feel his inward life and death, which have their birth, and growth, and strife against one another in every son of *Adam*.

And as this is the one good way of preaching, so it is, of all others, the most powerful and penetrating into the hearts of all men, let their condition be what it will.

For

For as these two states are certainly in every soul of man, however blended, smothered, and undistinguished in their operations for a *time*, yet they have each of them in some degree, their *hearing ears*, which though ever so sunk into dulness, will be forced, more or less, to feel the power of that voice which speaks nothing but what is, and must be in some sort spoken within themselves.

And this is the true end of outward preaching, namely, to give loud notice of the call of God in their souls, which though unheard, or neglected by them, is yet always subsisting within them. It is to make such outward sounds, as may reach and stir up the inward hearing of the heart. It is so to strike all the outward senses of the soul, that from sleeping in an inward insensibility of its own life and death, it may be brought into an awakened and feeling perception of itself, and be forced to know, that the evil of death which is in it will be its eternal master, unless the good of life that is in it, seeks for victory in the name and power and mediation of Christ, the only prince of life, and Lord of glory, and who only hath the keys of heaven, of death and hell in his hands.

Thus far, and no farther, goes the labour and ministry of man in the preaching of the word, whether it be of *Paul*, or *Cephas*.

Hence alſo you will be well qualified to open in your hearts a right ſenſe and knowledge of the truth and reality of every virtue, and every vice, that you are diſcourſing upon.

For ſince all that is good and evil, is only ſo to them, becauſe it lives in the life of their heart; they may eaſily be taught that no virtue, whether it be humility, or charity, has any goodneſs in it, but as it ſprings in and from the heart, nor any vice, whether it be pride, or wrath, is any farther renounced, than as its power and place in the heart are deſtroyed. And thus the inſignificancy and vanity of an outward formality, of a virtuous behaviour, and every thing ſhort of a new heart and new ſpirit in and through the power of Chriſt, dwelling vitally in them, may be fully ſhewn to be ſelf-deluſion and ſelf-deſtruction.

Your next great point, as a preacher, ſhould be to bring men to an entire faith in, and abſolute dependence upon, the continual power and operation of the ſpirit of God in them.

All churches, even down to the Socinians, are forced, in obedience to the letter of ſcripture, to hold *ſomething* of this doctrine.

But as the practice of all churches, for many ages, has had as much recourſe to learning, art, and ſcience, to qualify miniſters for the preaching of the goſpel, as if it

was

was *merely* a work of man's wisdom, so ecclesiastics, for the most part, come forth in the power of human qualifications, and are more or less full of themselves, and trusting to their own ability, according as they are more or less proficients in science and literature, languages, and rhetoric.

To this, more than to any one other cause, is the *great apostacy* of all Christendom to be attributed. This was the door, at which the *whole spirit* of the world entered into possession of the Christian Church.

Wordly lusts and interests, vanity, pride, envy, contention, bitterness and ambition (the death of all that is good in the soul) have now, and always had their chief nourishment, power, and support, from a sense of the merit and sufficiency of literal accomplishments.

Humility, meekness, patience, faith, hope, contempt of the world, and heavenly affections (the very life of Jesus in the soul) are by few people less earnestly desired, or more hard to be practised, than by great *wits*, *classical critics*, *linguists*, *historians*, and *orators* in holy orders.

Now to bring man to a right practical knowledge of that full dependence upon, and faith in the continual operation of the Holy Spirit, as the only raiser and preserver of the life of God in their hearts, and souls, and spi-

rits, it is not enough, you ſometimes or *often* preach upon the ſubject, but every thing that you inculcate ſhould be directed *conſtantly* to it, and all that you exhort men to ſhould be required only as a means of obtaining, and concurring with, that Holy Spirit, which is, and only can be, the *life* and *truth* of goodneſs. And all that you turn them from ſhould be as from ſomething that reſiſts and grieves that bleſſed ſpirit of God, which always wills and deſires to remove all evil out of our ſouls, and make us again to beſanctified partakers of the divine nature.

For as they only are Chriſtians who are born again of the ſpirit, ſo nothing ſhould be taught to Chriſtians but as a *work* of the ſpirit; nor any *thing* ſought but by the *power* of the ſpirit, as well in hearing as teaching. It is owing to the want of this, that there is ſo much preaching and hearing, and ſo little benefit either of the preacher or hearer.

The labour of the preacher is, for the moſt part, to diſplay logic, argument and eloquence upon religious ſubjects; and ſo he is juſt as much *carried* out of himſelf, and *united* to God by his own religious diſcourſes, as the pleader at the bar is by his law and oratory upon right and wrong.

And the hearers, by their regarding ſuch accompliſhments, go away juſt as much helped to be new men in Chriſt Jeſus, as by hearing

ing a cauſe of great equity well pleaded at the bar.

Now in both theſe caſes, with regard to preacher and people, the error is of the ſame kind, namely, a truſting to a power in themſelves; the one in an ability to perſuade powerfully; the other in an ability to act according to that which they hear.

And ſo the natural man goes on preaching, and the natural man goes on hearing of the things of God in a fruitleſs courſe of life. And thus it muſt be, ſo long as either preacher or hearers ſeek any thing elſe but to edify, and be edified in and through the immediate power and eſſential preſence of the Holy Spirit working in them.

The way therefore to be a faithful, and fruitful labourer in the vineyard of Chriſt, is to ſtand yourſelf in a full dependence on the ſpirit of God, as having no good power, but as his inſtrument, and by his influence, in all that you do; and to call others not to their own ſtrength or rational powers, but to a full hope and faith of having all that they want from God alone; not as teaching them to be good by men, but by men and outward inſtruction calling them to himſelf, to a birth of eſſential, inherent living goodneſs, wiſdom, and holineſs from his own eternal word, and Holy Spirit, living and dwelling in them. For as God is all that the fallen ſoul wants, ſo

nothing but God alone can communicate himſelf to it; all therefore is loſt labour, but the total converſion of the ſoul to the *immediate eſſential* operation of God in it.

As to the other parts of your office, whether they relate to things preſcribed, or to ſuch as are to be done according to your beſt diſcretion, there will not be much difficulty if you ſtand in the ſtate as above deſcribed.

As to ſeveral *outward forms* and *orders* in the church, they muſt be ſuppoſed to partake, in their degree, of that ſpirit, which has ſo long bore rule in all church-diviſions. But the private man, who has ſufficient call to the miniſtry, is not to conſider how outward things ſhould be, according to the primitive plan, but how the inward truth which is meant by them, may be fully adhered to.

Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, as diffeently practiſed in almoſt every particular church, may afford ground of ſcruple about them, ſince almoſt every church in theſe matters is condemned by all other churches.

But the way to be above, and free from theſe ſcruples, is to keep yourſelf and your people wholly intent to that *ſpiritual good*, of which theſe inſtitutions are the appointed outward figures, namely, to that ſpiritual regeneration, which is meant by baptiſm, and to that *ſpiritual living in Chriſt* and Chriſt in us, which is meant by the ſupper of the Lord.

And

And then, though the ſacraments practiſed by you ſhould have any outward imperfection in them, they would be of the ſame benefit to you, as they were to thoſe who uſed them in their firſt outwardly perfect form. And thus you will be led neither to over-rate, nor diſregard ſuch uſe of them, as is according to the preſent ſtate of the church. It is only the inward regenerate Chriſtian, that knows how to make a right uſe of all outward things. His ſoul being in ſuch a *ſtate* of union with God and man, as it ought to be, it takes every thing by the right handle, and turns every thing into a means of carrying on his love towards God and man. To the pure all things are pure.

When you viſit the *ſick*, or well *awakened*, or *dully ſenſeleſs*, uſe no pre-contrived knowledge or rules how you are to proceed with them, but go as in obedience to God, as on his errand, and ſay only what the love of God and man ſuggeſts to your heart, without any anxiety about the ſucceſs of it; that is God's work. Only ſee that the love, the tenderneſs, and patience of God towards ſinners, be uppermoſt in all that you do to man. Think not, that here ſeverity, and there tenderneſs, is to be ſhewn; for nothing is to be ſhewn to man *but his want of God*, nothing can ſhew him this ſo powerfully, ſo convincingly, as love. And as love is the fulfil-

fulfilling of the whole law, so love is the fulfilling of all the work of the ministry.

I am, with my best wishes
To you and your brethren,
Your most affectionate friend,
And willing servant.

April 10, 1756.

LETTER IV.

To a Clergyman of *Bucks*.

I AM much surprized, my friend, that you should still want more to be said about the doctrine of *imputation*, whether of *Adam*'s sin, or the *righteousness* of Christ to his followers. Our polluted sinful birth of *Adam* is all the sin we can have from him; and our *supernatural* birth of Christ is all the righteousness that we possibly can have from him. Imputation neither hath, nor can have any thing to do in either case: sin and righteousness are both inward and innate things, and the sole work of the spirit that lives in us. That which is born of God is godly, and cannot sin; and that which is born of sinful man cannot be without a sinful nature and tempers.

pers. *Cain* could not poſſibly have any other *natural* life than that which was in *Adam*; and therefore ſo ſure as *Adam* in ſoul, ſpirit, and body, was all ſin and corruption, ſo ſure is it that all his offspring muſt come from him in the ſame depravity of ſoul, ſpirit, and body. And to talk of their having this diſordered fallen nature, not from their natural birth, but by an *outward imputation* of it to them, is quite as abſurd, as to ſay, that they have their *hands* and *feet*, or the whole form of their body, not from their natural birth, but by an outward imputation of ſuch a form and members to them.—Suppoſe it was ſaid, that *Adam*'s evil and polluted condition of body and ſoul was not the natural effect of his tranſgreſſion, but independently of that came upon him from God's imputing it to him as his, though it was not his. What a blaſphemy would this be? And yet not leſs than that, of ſaying, that his children have their evil nature, the ſinful ſtate of their wills and affections, not by their natural birth from him, but independently of that ſolely from God's imputing ſuch a ſinful ſtate to them, that is, that God imputed *Adam*'s ſinful nature to *Cain*, though he was by birth free from ſin, and born in the purity and perfection in which *Adam* was created; for ſo he muſt have been if his birth had nothing of ſinful *Adam* in it. But if *Cain* was not ſo born,

born, then he had his sin not by an imputation of another's sin to him, but plainly in the same way of natural birth, as every man has his natural life and form of his body from parents of the same nature and form. And indeed, to speak of sin imputed to a person that has it not, and so made his, is the same absurdity, as speaking of will and affections imputed to a person that has them not, and so made his. For sin is no where but in and from the will and affections, and therefore to make sin to be there by imputation where it is not, has no more sense in it than to make *will* and *affections* to be by imputation in a creature that has them not.

As in Adam all die, says the text: Is not this the same as saying that all men have their fallen nature, because born of *Adam?* Say, This does not follow, and, then the matter will stand thus: *In Adam all die:* But *why*, or *how?* Why because no man hath the evil of a mortal fallen nature from his birth from *Adam*, but merely by God's *free imputation* of it to him.

But such a free imputation of *Adam's* sinful state to his children, when they had it not by natural birth, is quite blasphemous, and leaves no room for magnifying the *free grace* of God in Christ Jesus; since *free grace* comes only to help man out of a sinful state which he had not by natural birth, but came upon him

him by God's *free imputation* of it to him when he had it not. Thus the adorable love of God in his free grace in Chriſt Jeſus is quite deſtroyed, upon ſuppoſition, that mankind have not their ſinful ſtate from their natural birth from *Adam*, but by a free imputation of it by God to them.

Take now the other part of the text, *So in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive*. Is it not a flat denial of this, to ſay, they are not *made alive* by a birth of that to which *Adam* died, brought to life again in them, but are *accounted* as if they were alive by the imputation of Chriſt's *life* to them, but not born in them? Could dead *Lazarus* have been ſaid to have been made alive again, if ſtill lying in the grave he had only been *accounted* as alive, by having the nature of a living man only imputed to him.

Our Lord ſaid to a leper, whom he had cleanſed, *Go, ſhew thyſelf to the prieſt, &c.* but if inſtead of *cleanſing* him, he had bid him go to the prieſt to be *accounted* as a clean man, by the imputation of another's cleanneſs to him, had he not ſtill been under all the evil of his own leproſy? Now this is ſtrictly the caſe of the righteouſneſs of Chriſt only outwardly imputed to us, and not inwardly born within us.—A fiction, that runs counter to all that Chriſt and his apoſtles have ſaid of the nature of our ſalvation. We

want

want Christ's righteousness, because by our natural birth we are inwardly full of evil; therefore saith Christ, *Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Does not this place all in a birth; but a birth and outward imputation are inconsistent; that which is born in us cannot be said to be outwardly imputed to us. *I am the vine,* saith Christ, *ye are the branches.* Now if this be a true representation of the matter, then these two plain doctrines of Christ, 1. Affirming the absolute necessity of a new birth from above, and 2. Declaring this birth to be as really brought forth in us, as the life of the vine is really in the branches, do as far as words can do it, entirely reject the notion of a righteousness imputed to us from without; a righteousness that has no more to do with our own life, after it is imputed to us, than it had a thousand years before we were born. For that which is not in us, or our's, by a birth of itself in us, can never be any nearer to us, or have a more real union with us, after it is *called* ours, than before it was so called. I say *called,* for imputation, whether of sin or righteousness, if its power is not living in us, is no more than *mere calling* that ours which is not ours.

It is needless to cite places of scripture affirming that all consists in a Christ revealed, begotten, formed, and living in us. Let this

this one word of *Paul* ſuffice, *Yet not I, but Chriſt that liveth in me.* He does not ſay, a Chriſt who is only called his, or outwardly imputed to him, but the quite contrary, a Chriſt *who liveth* in him.

Again, if Chriſt's holy nature be not a birth in us, but only outwardly imputed to us, then no virtue, or power of an holy life, can have any more real exiſtence, or vital growth in us, than in the devils, but are only outwardly imputed to us, and not to them, only called ours, and not theirs, though we have no more of them within us than they have. Thus, *Be ye holy, for I am holy; be ye perfect, as your father which is in heaven is perfect; thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, &c.* all theſe are but vain exhortations to do and be that which is not within our ſphere, but entirely inconſiſtent with it. For theſe virtues are, in their whole nature, nothing elſe but the *very righteouſneſs* of Chriſt; therefore if that can be only outwardly imputed to us, the ſame muſt be ſaid of *all theſe virtues*, that they can have no real life or growth in us, but only outwardly imputed to us. And indeed, unleſs Chriſt be truly and eſſentially born in us, we can have no more of any Chriſtian virtue, but the empty outward name of it: for neither man nor angel ever did, or can thus love God with all his heart, be holy becauſe God is holy, be perfect as he is perfect; but becauſe there is a

ſpirit

ſpirit *born and living* in them, which is of God, from God, and partakers of the divine nature.

Farther, ſay that the *Holy Spirit* is not born and living in us, that his operation is not inwardly in us, as the ſpirit of our ſpirit, the life of our life, but only outwardly imputed to us, as if he was in us, though he be not there: what a blaſphemy would this be? And yet full as well, as to ſay the ſame of Chriſt and his righteouſneſs. For if Chriſt was only outwardly imputed to us, the ſame muſt of all neceſſity be ſaid of the Holy Spirit; for *where* and *what* Chriſt is, *there* and *that* is the Holy Spirit. How conſtantly are we told in ſcripture, that they *only* are the ſons of God *who are led by the ſpirit of God*; that unleſs *a man hath the ſpirit of Chriſt he is none of his*; *that if Chriſt be not in us we are reprobates*. Now I would aſk, can any man be truly ſaid to be led by the ſpirit of the world, the fleſh, and the devil, who has nothing of this ſpirit *living* in him, but only outwardly imputed to him? Can any creature be ſaid to be led by the ſpirit of man, who has not the nature of man within him, but only outwardly imputed to him? Yes, juſt as a *beaſt* may be ſaid to be a *Newtonian* philoſopher, by having Sir *Iſaac*'s ſyſtem outwardly imputed to him.

Take notice, Sir, that if Chriſt's righteous and holy nature is only outwardly imputed to Chriſtians, then all of them, whether they are called good, or bad, are without any difference

rence as to their inward man, and all under the same unaltered evil of their fallen nature, as much *after* as they were *before* Christ's righteousness was imputed to them. When a good man has any thing *falsely* laid to his charge, is not this *outwardly imputing* something to him, that is not his, does not belong to him? But is not his own inward goodness just in the same fulness of truth in him, *after such* an imputation of evil to him, as it was *before* it was so imputed? Now this is the whole nature of imputation; and therefore if the righteous nature of Christ is only outwardly imputed to the sinner, it leaves him in all the evil of his fallen nature, and can no more make him inwardly good, than a good man can be made inwardly evil by having an evil outwardly imputed to him, that is not his.

The relation between Christ and the fallen soul is thus; Christ is the *one mediator* between God and man, and that which his mediation consists in is the restoring that life in man, which was his first created union with God. Nothing separated man from God, or made him want a mediator, but the loss of his first divine life; and therefore nothing can mediate, or be a means of union again between God and man, but that which can and doth raise again in man that divine life which was his first union with God. Every

thing therefore that is said of this one mediator, as *redeeming*, *ransoming*, *justifying*, *sanctifying*, making *peace* or *reconciliation*, *&c.* however variously expressed, has no other nature or meaning, but that of making fallen man *inwardly alive again* in God.—He in *whom* Christ is the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*, has just that *same change* made in him, just that *same* done to him, as he *that has his sins washed and cleansed by the blood of the Lamb.* For these different expressions mean only *one* and the *same* thing, and that one thing is *Christ in us our hope of glory.* This is justification, sanctification, redemption, peace, reconciliation, and everlasting union with God.—Trifling therefore, to the last degree, is their *orthodoxy*, who raise disputes, and set up different doctrines, on the different meaning of these words, and the danger of not knowing, or not stiffly contending for the blessed difference between *justification* and *sanctification*, *&c.* Full as trifling, as to raise disputes, and set up different doctrines on the different names given to *Jesus Christ*, as *Word of God*, *Son of Man*, *Lamb of God*, *Alpha and Omega*, *Mediator*, *Immanuel*, *Atonement*, *Reconciliation*, *Resurrection*, *&c.* and the great danger of ascribing that to Christ as our *reconciliation* which only belongs to him as called the *resurrection* and *the life*.—Figure to yourself such an orthodox dispute as this, and then

then you will see the importance of that pious zeal, which will not suffer *justification* and *sanctification* to encroach upon one another.

What an egregious folly, to be learnedly laborious in dividing and distinguishing these different names of Christ, or the different effects of his purchasing, justifying, or sanctifying our souls, *&c.* when all that these things are told us for, and all the benefit that we can receive from them, lies solely in this one word of Christ, *If any one will be my disciple* (that is, if any one will have the benefit of all that I am, and of all that is said of me) *let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.* Then, and then only, all the different names of Christ, and all the different powers ascribed to him, will be, not critically, but blessedly known and understood to be one, as God is one, whether he be called I AM, or the Creator of Heaven and Earth, or the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But to proceed: All that is said of the nature, office, and qualities of Christ, in order to be our redeemer, is so much said of the necessity of their being essentially found and realized in every soul that is to partake of his redemption.—If *Christ be not in us, we are none of his.* But how can Christ be in us, but because all that which Christ was, in the spirit and nature of his whole process, is in us as it was in him? If the *same mind be not in us*

which was in Christ Jesus; if that which *loved*, that which *willed*, that which *suffered* in him be not the same spirit in us, we shall never reign with him. He may be truly called a redeemer, but we are not *his redeemed*, for such as the redeemer is, such are they that are redeemed.

To him that overcometh, saith Christ, *will I grant to sit with me on my throne*, [N. B.] *even as I overcame, and am set down with my father on his throne.* What becomes now of the vain fiction of an outward *imputation?* Is Christ's victory here imputed to us? Is not the contrary as strongly taught us as words can do it? *To him that overcometh, even as I also overcame.*

Can we have fuller proof that Christ's righteous nature must be inwardly born, living, and manifesting itself in us, as it did in him? How else can we overcome, *even as he overcame?* That spirit which overcame in Christ was manifest in the flesh for no other end, but that the same conquering spirit might be born in us. And when that is done, then all is done by that *grace of God which bringeth salvation*, justification, sanctification, or the new creature. For whether you call it by one, or by all these names, it is the *white stone with the new name written in it*, which no man knoweth *but he that hath received it.* And that for this reason, because it

is

is no *outwardly imputed* thing, but is the new name, the new nature, and ſpirit of Chriſt, become *all in all* in us, and ſo only to be known by thoſe who have it brought to life in them.

Again, *This is my blood which is ſhed for many for the remiſſion of ſins:* What follows? Why, *Drink ye all of this:—If we ſuffer with him, we ſhall alſo reign with him:—The blood of Jeſus Chriſt, his ſon, cleanſeth us from all iniquity:—Who hath waſhed us from our ſins in his blood.* Now to ſhew you that all theſe different ſayings have but one and the ſame doctrine, you need only read the following *deciſive* words: *Theſe are they that came out of great tribulation* (that is, have trodden the wine-preſs with Chriſt) *and have waſhedtheir robes in the blood of the Lamb.* Here you ſee is no *outward imputation* of the ſufferings of Chriſt; but *their coming out of great tribulation*, or paſſing through the whole proceſs of Chriſt, was that alone which made their *robes to be waſhed in the blood of the Lamb.* And no other doctrine is in this text than if it had been ſaid, *Theſe are they, who having denied themſelves, taken up their daily croſs, and followed Chriſt, have thereby waſhed their robes in the blood of the Lamb.* Through all the New-Teſtament this is the one doctrine of ſalvation through the blood of Chriſt, it is *drinking the*

cup that he drank of, and not the bitterneſs of his cup outwardly imputed to us.

You tell me, my friend, that the ſeraphic *Aſpaſio* is quite tranſported with the thought of the imputation of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to the ſinner, and that it ſhould in the account of God be eſteemed as his.—It may be ſo. Tranſport ſeems to be as natural to *Aſpaſio*, as flying is to a bird. But ſurely a more tranſporting, a more glorious thing it is, both to the glory of God, and the good of man, that the ſinner is, through the righteous nature of Chriſt born and brought to life in him, ſet up again in his firſt likeneſs and image of God. For if man's righteouſneſs is not *eſſentially* reſtored in him, as it was eſſentially in him at the firſt, has he not leſs of God in him by his redemption, than he had at his creation? Is it to the happineſs of man, and the glory of God, that God has not obtained that *dwelling* in man, for which he alone created him?

Is it matter of tranſport to think, that fallen man will to all eternity live deſtitute of his firſt heavenly nature, his firſt divine life, which he had in and from God? But this muſt be the caſe, if Chriſt's righteouſneſs is only *outwardly imputed* to him, and not *eſſentially* born in him.

Tranſports, my friend, are but poor proofs of truth, or of the goodneſs of the heart

from

from whence they proceed. *Martyrdom* has had its *fools* as well as its *saints*, and zealots may live and die in a joy that has all its ſtrength from deluſion.

You may ſee a man drowned in tears at beholding and kiſſing a *wooden crucifix*, and the ſame man condemning another as a *wicked heretic*, who only honours the *croſs* by being daily baptized into the death of Chriſt.—Nay, ſo blind is *opinion-zeal*, that ſome good Chriſtian paſtors will not ſcruple to tell you, they could find no joy in their own ſtate, no ſtrength or comfort in their labours of love towards their flocks, but becauſe they know and are aſſured from St. *Paul*, that God never had, nor ever will have, *mercy on all men*; but that an unknown multitude of them are through all ages of the world inevitably decreed by God to an eternal fire and damnation of hell, and an unknown number of others to an irreſiſtible ſalvation.

Wonder not then if the *inquiſition* has its pious defenders; for *inquiſition-cruelty*, nay every barbarity that muſt have an end, is mere mercy, if compared with this doctrine.—And to be in love with it, to draw ſweet comfort from it, and wiſh it God ſpeed, is a love that abſolutely forbids the loving our neighbour as ourſelves, and makes the wiſh, that all men might be ſaved, no leſs than a rebellion againſt God.—It is a

love with which the *curſed hater* of all men would willingly unite and take comfort; for could he know from St. *Paul*, that millions, and millions of mankind, are created and doomed to be his eternal ſlaves, he might be as content with this doctrine, as ſome good preachers are, and ceaſe *going about, as a roaring lion, ſeeking whom he may devour*, as knowing that his kingdom was ſo ſufficiently provided for without any labours of his own.

Oh, the ſweetneſs of *God's election!* cries out the raviſhed preacher. Oh, the ſweetneſs of *God's reprobation!* might the helliſh Satan well ſay, could he believe that God had made him a *free gift* of ſuch myriads and myriads of men, of all nations, tongues, and languages, from the beginning to the end of the world, and reſerved ſo ſmall a number for himſelf. This is the bleſſed fruit of the imputation doctrine.

What a complaint, and condemnation is there made in ſcripture of thoſe who ſacrificed their ſons and daughters unto devils! And yet this reprobation-doctrine repreſents God as ſacrificing myriads of his own creatures, made in his own image, to an everlaſting hell.

There is not an abſurdity of heatheniſh faith and religion, but what is leſs ſhocking than this doctrine; and yet ſo blindly are ſome zea-

zealous doctors of the gospel bigotted to it, as to set it forth as the glorious manifestation of the *supreme sovereignty* of God.

My friend, let any old woman preach to you rather than these doctors.

But to end in one word, Christ's righteousness is ours, in our redemption, just in the same manner as it was *Adam*'s, in his first holy birth. For *Adam* had then no righteousness in him but that which was created in Christ Jesus. And that is the one only reason, why there could be no other redeemer but Christ, because the loss of Christ was that death which *Adam* died by his fall; and therefore no possibility of coming out of his fallen state, but in and by a birth of Christ's *righteous nature essentially* born and living in him, as it was living in him before he fell.

Little children, saith St. John, *let no man deceive you* [N. B.] *He that doth righteousness, is righteous*, [N. B.] *even as he is righteous*. Therefore to expect or trust to be made righteous by the righteousness of another only outwardly imputed to us, is, according to the apostle, *deceiving ourselves*.

Either man by the *mediation* of Christ is *united* again with God, or he is not; if he is not, then he has no more of the *divine life* in him after his redemption, than he had before he was redeemed. But if he is again united with God as he was at his creation, then

then his redemption must wholly consist in the birth of a divine nature and spirit essentially brought to life in him. That which is spirit in man must be godlike, before it can unite with that spirit which is God. And was there not a divine spirit in man, truly born of and proceeding from the spirit of God, as his real offspring, no union of will, love, or desire, could be between God and man. For this is a truth, that extends itself through all that is natural or supernatural, *that like can only unite with like.* There is no separation between things, but that which is effected by contrariety. If therefore nothing in man was a partaker of the divine nature, man must in his whole nature be for ever separated from God, and stand in the same impossibility of being united with him, that two the most contrary things do to one another. So sure therefore as the *mediation* of Christ is by himself declared to be for this end, *viz. that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one;* so sure is it, that an *outwardly* imputed Christ is as absurd in itself, and as contrary to scripture, as an *outwardly imputed God.*

Farewel.

LET-

LETTER V.

In Answer to a Scruple.

THAT you may have a full answer to your scruple concerning these words, *the folly of debtor and creditor*, in the second part of the *Spirit of Love*, I will set forth the doctrine from whence it is taken.—— Great part of that book is to clear up, and assert the true scripture-doctrine of the *nature*, *necessity*, and *merit* of our Lord's sufferings and death, as an *atonement* and *satisfaction* before God in the work of our redemption. No point of Christianity has been more mistaken in our common systems of gospel-doctrine, or given greater offence than this, and yet nothing clearer, or more reasonably to be believed, when it stands in its own scriptural-manifestation.

Now the right ground of understanding the true meaning of every different expression relating to Christ, as our saviour or salvation, lies in these two things: 1. What Christ is in himself. 2. What he does, or intends to do for us.

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The ſcripture ſaith, *God was manifeſted in the fleſh*; this deſcribes his whole nature, what he was in himſelf, *viz.* the Deity become man. What he is, and does in us, to us, and for us, is expreſſed in the following words, *He was manifeſted to deſtroy the works of the devil*; and again, *As in Adam all die, ſo in Chriſt ſhall all be made alive.*

Now according to this ground every expreſſion concerning our Saviour is to have its true infallible meaning fixed. Every thing that is ſaid of his *birth*, his *life*, his *ſufferings*, his *death*, his *reſurrection*, and *aſcenſion*, are all of them, both with reſpect to God and ourſelves, of *one and the ſame* efficacy, full of *one and the ſame merit*, and all for *one and the ſame end, viz.* to deſtroy in man the works of the devil, and to make *all that died in Adam to be alive again in Chriſt.*

Suppoſe now any one of theſe to be wanting, and the ſame will follow from it, as if they were all wanting. Had his *birth* been otherwiſe than it was, not God as well as man, he could have made no beginning of a divine life in us. Had not his *life been without ſin*, his *death* upon the croſs could have done us no good, nor could he have been the *one mediator* between God and *ſinful* man. Had his *ſufferings* been leſs than they were, had there been any evil, trial, or temptation, which had not attacked him, through the

the whole courſe of his life, with all its force, he could not have been ſaid to have *overcome them*. So ſure therefore as Chriſt, as a ſon of man was to *overcome* all that the world, the fleſh, and the devil could do to fallen man, ſo ſure is it that all the evils which they could poſſibly bring upon fallen man were to be *felt* and *ſuffered* by him, as abſolutely neceſſary in the nature of the thing to prove his victorious ſuperiority over them. Had he not given up his body to an ignominious death, in all the *horrors of a ſoul that had loſt its God*, he could not have ſuffered *that* in and for man, which every man muſt have ſuffered who had died in his *fallen ſtate*. But Chriſt dying and ſacrificing himſelf, as he did, in and through that horrible death, which was fallen man's gate to eternal miſery, and conquering *this ſtate* of man, as he had every evil power of the world, the fleſh, and the devil, then it was that he could ſay to thoſe who were all their life in fear of *this death*, Be of good comfort, I have overcome this death; and that upon the ſame ground as he ſaid to his followers, under a ſenſe of worldly tribulations, *Be of good comfort, I have overcome the world*. And thus his *death* had no *other nature*, with reſpect to us, than every other part of his proceſs that was *antecedent* to it, only as it was the laſt, and greateſt, and *finiſhing* part of that *redeeming work*, which

which was begun by his *divine birth*, and carried on in and through his sinless perfect life. And as I said that the death of man *unredeemed* was his gate into an *eternal separation* from God, so Christ's entrance into this gate of *damnation*, and pouring out his blood thus forsaken of God, had a suffering in it that thoughts can no more conceive, than words express.

Hence it is by way of eminence, justly said to be the highest price that he paid for us; and that by his blood it is that we are washed, and redeemed, not only because of its greatness in itself, but because it finished and for ever *completed* the whole redeeming work which he had to do for us in the flesh.—— Hence it was, that through the Old Testament this sacrifice of his death is the great thing mostly pointed at in all its sacrifices, types, and figures: hence also is all the boast of it in the gospel. Well therefore may the church, through all ages, have ascribed so much to the merit of his bloodshed for us; well may it have been celebrated as the one great price by which we are ransomed from the power of death and hell; because though all that he was and did antecedently to it was *equally necessary* to our salvation, yet all had been without an effect, unless by his so dying, this *damnable death* had been *swallowed up in victory*.

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In ſhort, had not Chriſt been real God as well as real man, he could have made no beginning in the work of our ſalvation, and had he not ended his life in ſuch a ſacrifice as he did, he could never have ſaid *it is finiſhed.*— He therefore who denieth the truth, the certainty, and abſolute neceſſity of theſe two eſſential points, is in the abomination of *Socinianiſm*, and is that very *liar* and *antichriſt* deſcribed by St. *John* in his firſt epiſtle.

Again, though Chriſt's death was thus abſolutely neceſſary in the very nature of the thing, thus great in its merits and effects, yet unleſs his *reſurrection* had followed we had been yet in our ſins, nor could he, till riſen from the grave, have purchaſed a reſurrection for us. *Laſtly*, had he not *aſcended* into heaven, he could not have had the power of *drawing*, as he ſaid, *all men to himſelf.*— Every part therefore of our Saviour's character, or proceſs, has its *full* and *equal* ſhare in all that which is ſaid of him, as our *peace* with God, our *righteouſneſs*, our *juſtification*, our *ranſom*, our *atonement*, our *ſatisfaction*, our *life* and new *birth*; for all theſe different expreſſions have no difference in doctrine, but whether ſeparately, or jointly taken, ſignify nothing elſe but this one thing, that he was the true and full *deſtroyer* of all *the works of the devil* in man, and the true raiſer of *a divine life in all that died in Adam.*

And

And here, sir, you are well to observe, that all that Christ was, did, suffered, and obtained, was *purely* and *solely* on the account, and for the sake of *altering* or *removing* that which was wrong, evil, and miserable in man; or in scripture words, *God was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world to himself*, that is, taking away from man every property or power of evil, that kept him in a state of separation from God. Thus it was, and to this end, that *God was in Christ Jesus* in his whole process.

Unreasonably therefore have our scholastic systems of the gospel *separated* the sacrifice of Christ's death from the *other parts* of his process, and considered it as something chiefly done with regard to God, to alter or atone an infinite wrath that was raised in God against fallen man, which infinity of just vengeance, or vindictive justice, must have devoured the sinner, unless an *infinite* satisfaction had been made to it by the death of Christ.

All this is in the grossest ignorance of God, of the reason, and ground, and effects of Christ's death, and in full contradiction to the express letter of scripture. For there we are told, that God is love, and that the infinity of his love was that alone which shewed itself towards fallen man, and wanted to have *satisfaction* done to it; which love-desire could not be *fulfilled*, could not be *satisfied* with any thing less than man's full deliverance from all

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the evil of his fallen ſtate. That love, which has the infinity of God, nay, which is God himſelf, was ſo immutably great towards man, though fallen from him, *that he ſpared not his only begotten ſon:* And why did he not ſpare him? It was becauſe nothing but the incarnate life of his eternal ſon, paſſing through all the *miſerable ſtates* of loſt man, could regenerate his firſt divine life in him. Can you poſſibly be told this in ſtronger words than theſe, *God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten ſon:* How did he give him? Why, in his whole proceſs. And to what end did he give him? Why, *that all who believe in him might not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* —Away then with the ſuperſtitious dream of an *infinite* wrath in God towards poor fallen man, which could never ceaſe till an *infinite ſatisfaction* was made to it. All ſcripture denies it, and the light of nature abhors it— The *birth*, the *life*, the *death* of Chriſt, though ſo different things, have but one and the ſame operation, and that operation is ſolely *in man*, to drive all evil out of his fallen nature, and delight the heart of God that deſires his ſalvation.—God is love, and has no other will towards man but the will of love. That love which from itſelf began the creation of an holy *Adam*, from itſelf began the redemption of a fallen *Adam*.—The death of Chriſt was a ſacrifice from the love of God the ſon towards man, to overcome thereby that *damna-*

ble death, which otherwiſe every ſon of *Adam* muſt have died; it was a ſacrifice offered to the ſame love in God the father, a ſacrifice equally loved and deſired by both of them, becauſe in the nature of the thing as abſolutely neceſſary to alter and overcome that evil which belonged to man's *ſtate of death*, as the incarnation of the WORD was abſolutely neceſſary in the nature of the thing to make man to be alive again in God.

This is the one only true and full confutation of *Socinianiſm*.

But to have recourſe to a ſuppoſed *wrath*, or *vindictive juſtice*, in a God incenſed towards fallen man, in order to confute the *Socinian*, who denies the neceſſity and effects of Chriſt's death, is only oppoſing one great falſity with another.—For *wrath* has no more place in God, than *love* has in the devil. Wrath began with devils, hell, and fallen nature, and can have no poſſible exiſtence any where, or in any thing but where devils, hell, and fallen nature have their power of working.

Do not, my friend, be here ſo furious, as to ſay, that if it was ſtrictly true that there was *no wrath in God*, you would *burn your Bible:* for if it was not ſtrictly true, you would never have had a Bible to burn, nor any more meſſages from heaven about man's ſalvation, than from hell.—For if you will have

have *wrath* in the moſt high God, you can have no other, or better a God, than that which the atheiſtical *Spinoza* invented.

For if wrath is in the ſupreme God, then nature is in God, and if ſo, then God is nature, and *nothing elſe*; for nature cannot be above itſelf. Therefore if nature is in the moſt high God, then the loweſt working of nature is the true ſupreme God.—And ſo inſtead of a *ſupernatural* God, who created heaven and earth; heaven and earth, and all things elſe, are the only God.

This is the atheiſtical abſurdity that neceſſarily follows from the ſuppoſing *a wrath* in God; for wrath can no more be any where but in *nature*, than *ſtorms* and *tempeſts* can be where there is nothing that *moves*.

Let me here, Sir, obſerve to you the bare-faced calumny that Dr. *Warburton* has ventured to caſt upon me in charging my writings with *Spinoſiſm*, though all that I have wrote for theſe laſt twenty years has been ſuch a full confutation of it, as is not to be found in any book that has been purpoſely written againſt it. Had I only proved, as I have done by a variety of proofs, that wrath cannot poſſibly be in the true God, I had ſufficiently confuted *Spinoſiſm*; for if not wrath, then nothing of *nature* is in God. But I have gone much farther, and have, in my *Appeal*, the book of *Regeneration*, the *Spirit of Prayer*,

the *Spirit of Love*, and the *Way to Divine Knowledge*, opened the true ground of the unchangeable distinction between God and nature, making all nature, whether temporal or eternal, its own proof that it is not, cannot be God, but purely and solely the WANT of God, and can be nothing else in itself but a restless painful want, till a *supernatural* God manifests himself in it.—This is a doctrine which the learned of all ages have known nothing of; not a book, antient or modern in all our libraries, has so much as attempted to open the *ground* of nature, to shew its *birth* and *state*, and its essential unalterable distinction from the one *abyssal supernatural* God; and how all the glories, powers, and perfections of the hidden unapproachable God, have their wonderful manifestation in nature and creature. This is a blessing reserved by God for these last times, to be opened in his chosen instrument, the poor illiterate *Behmen*. And this I will venture to say, that he who will declare war against him, has no choice of any other weapons but raillery and reproach. To call the blessed man a *possessed cobler* will be doing something; to call his writings *senseless jargon* may stand his learned adversary in great stead; but if he tries to overcome him any other way, his success will be like his who knocks his head against a post.—But no more of this here.

And

And now, Sir, what ſhall I ſay of my learned accuſing doctor? Why only this, that if he knows how to forgive himſelf, then there will be one thing at leaſt in which we are both of us like-minded.

A word or two now to yourſelf and friends, who are ſo loath to own a God who is all love: let me tell you, if you will have wrath in the ſupreme God, you muſt have a God in whom is ſelfiſhneſs, envy, and pride, with all the properties of fallen nature. For as it is impoſſible for one of theſe to be without the other in the creature, ſo if any one of them was in God, all the other muſt be there. They are the four eſſential elements of hell, or fallen nature, which mutually beget, and are begotten of one another; where one is, there are all of them; and where all are not, there cannot be one of them. Every pride conſiſts of three things, ſelfiſhneſs, envy, and wrath. And ſo of every one of them, take which you will, it conſiſts of the other three, ſo that to ſeparate them is to ſeparate a thing from itſelf.

Divine love is juſt as contrary to them, as God is to the devil; and where love is not, there God is not, and where the work is not *wholly* the working of love, it is no work of God, but the *ſelfiſh*, *wrathful*, *proud*, *envious* working of the diabolical nature, fallen from

its first blessed subjection to, and union with the *supernatural God of love*.

To talk (as some do) of a *good wrath* in God, which is only so called, because it has a *likeness* to, and produces *like effects* to those that come from wrath in the creature, is but calling that a good wrath which is like a *bad* wrath, and is no better, no wiser, than to talk of a good envy, a good pride in God, which are only so called, because they have a *likeness* to that which is a *bad* pride and a *bad* envy in the creature. Can any thing be more profanely absurd than this? Which yet is the best that can be said by those who will have it the *glory* of God to be wrathful, who think all is lost, that the gospel-salvation is blasphemed, if the *same* love that created man in glory, should be his only redeemer when he had fallen from it. Not considering, that salvation could never have come into the world, but because all that good and blessing which love can be and do to the creature, must be done and doing for ever and ever, by that first creating God, whose name and nature, whose will and working, is love, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever.

And now, Sir, need I say much more to remove your scruple about the following passage in the *Spirit of Love*, "No wrath in God, "no fictitious atonement, no folly of debtor "and creditor, no suffering for suffering's "sake,

" ſake, but a Chriſt ſuffering and dying, as " his *ſame victory* over death and hell, as " when he roſe from the dead and *aſcended* " into heaven*."

I ſaid *folly* of *debtor and creditor*, becauſe Chriſt's overcoming man's *damnable death* by his victorious paſſage through it, has nothing in it that has any likeneſs to the tranſaction of a debtor paying his creditor; nothing was done in it by way of *payment* of a debt, any more than Chriſt paid a debt for *Lazarus* when he raiſed him from the dead, or paid a debt for the man born blind whom he helped to ſeeing eyes. For the good that is done us by the death of Chriſt is a good that relates *ſolely* to ourſelves. Nothing in it is given to or received but by ourſelves; it overcomes and ſaves us from our *own evil* of *death* juſt as *that* which Chriſt did to *Lazarus*, and the *blind* man, overcame the death that was *in* the one, and the darkneſs that was in the other.

You appeal to a parable of our Lord's which has no more relation to the *nature* and *efficacy* of Chriſt's death, than the parable of the *tares of the field*. St. *Peter* ſaith, *How oft ſhall my brother ſin againſt me, and I forgive him*, till ſeven times? Chriſt *anſwereth, not until ſeven times, but until ſeventy times ſeven.*

* Spirit of Love, Part II. p. 131.

And then he sets forth this doctrine of continual forgiveness in the following parable.

The kingdom of God is likened to a certain king, who would take account of his servants, &c. Read the whole parable, and you will be forced to see that nothing else is intended to be taught by it, but that one conclusion which Christ draws from it: *So likewise shall my heavenly father do unto you, if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.* All that the parable saith is neither more nor less than is said in these other words, *Be ye merciful, as your Father which is in heaveu is merciful: Again,* the doctrine of this parable quite overthrows *that* which systematic doctors intend by *debtor* and *creditor*; for their doctrine is, that the injured authority of God *must have full satisfaction* made to it, and thence it is that they ground the necessity of so great a payment as Christ made to it. Whereas this parable of the kingdom of God sets forth a king, [N. B.] *frankly forgiving,* and not requiring any payment at all, either from the debtor himself, or from any one else for him.—Can there therefore be a greater folly than to appeal to this, and the like scriptures, to make God a *creditor,* whose vindictive wrath against his *debtor* will not be appeased till *full payment* is made to it? And what a blind persisting is it in the same folly

folly to urge the petition in the Lord's prayer, *Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors*, as another proof that God is that creditor who will be fully paid the debts that are due to him? For surely, if God requires us to expect, and pray for the *forgiveneſs of our debts*, it is badly concluded from thence that therefore *full payment* of them muſt be made. The truth is, this petition teaches the ſame *frank forgiveneſs* as the foregoing parable, and is utterly inconſiſtent with the doctrine of an *infinite ſatisfaction* neceſſary to be made: for if ſo, then the petition ought to have been thus, *Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors*, [N. B.] when *full payment is made*, either by themſelves, or by ſome one elſe for them.

In a word, a *vindictive wrath* in God, that will not forgive till a ſatisfaction equal to the offence is made to it, ſets the goodneſs of God in a lower ſtate than that which has been found in thouſands of mankind. The truth of the matter is this, the *divinity* of Chriſt, and his whole proceſs through life and death, were abſolutely *neceſſary in the nature of the thing* to raiſe man out of the death of ſin into a heavenly birth of life. And the neceſſity of all this is grounded upon the certainty of man's fall from a divine into a beaſtial life of this world. The Socinian blaſphemy conſiſts in the denial of theſe points, the deity of Chriſt

Chriſt and the fall of man, and the neceſſity of Chriſt's death.——Our ſcholaſtic doctors own the fall of man, but know or own nothing of the true nature and depth of it.—They own the truth of Chriſt's divinity, and the neceſſity of his ſufferings; they plead for the certainty of theſe things from ſcripture words, but ſee not into the *ground* of them, or in what the *abſolute neceſſity* of them conſiſts. Hence it is, that when oppoſed by *Socinian* reaſoning, they are at a loſs how to ſupport theſe great truths, and are forced to *humanize* the matter, and to ſuppoſe ſuch a *vindictive wrath* in God as uſually breaks forth in great princes, when a revolt is made againſt their ſovereign authority.

What a paltry logic to ſay, God is *righteouſneſs* and *juſtice* as well as *love*, and therefore his love cannot help, or forgive the ſinner, till his juſtice, or righteous wrath has ſatisfaction? Every word here is in full ignorance of the things ſpoken of. For what is *love* in God but his *will to all goodneſs?* What is *righteouſneſs* in God but his *unchangeable* love of his *own goodneſs*, his *impoſſibility* of loving any thing elſe but it, his impoſſibility of ſuffering any thing that is unrighteous to have any communion with him? What is God's *forgiving* ſinful man? it is nothing elſe in its whole nature but God's making him *righteous* again. There is no other forgiveneſs of

of sin but being made free from it. Therefore the compassionate love of God, that forgives sin, is no other than God's *love* of his own *righteousness*, for the sake of which, and through the love of which, he makes man righteous again. This is the *one righteousness* of God, that is *rigorous*, that makes *no abatements*, that must be *satisfied*, must be fulfilled in every creature that is to have communion with him. And this righteousness that is thus *rigorous* is nothing else but the unalterable *purity* and *perfection* of the divine love, which from eternity to eternity can love nothing but its own righteousness, can will nothing but its own goodness, and therefore can will nothing towards fallen man but the return of his lost goodness by a new birth of the divine life in him, which is the *true forgiveness* of sins. For what is the sinful state of man? It is nothing else but the loss of that divine nature, which cannot commit sin; therefore the *forgiving* man's sin is in the truth and reality of it nothing else but the revival of that nature in man, which *being born of God sinneth not*. *Lastly*, let me ask these dividers of the divine nature, What different shares, or different work, had the *righteousness* and the *love* of God, in the creation of man? Was there then something done by the love of God, which ought not to be ascribed to the righteousness of God? Who can be so

weak

weak as to ſay this? But if the love and the righteouſneſs of God are one, as God is one, and had but one work in the *creation* of man, it muſt be the higheſt abſurdity to ſay, that in the *redemption* of man the love and the righteouſneſs of God muſt have, not only different, but *contrary* works, that the love of God cannot act till the righteouſneſs of God, as ſomething *different from it*, is firſt ſatisfied.

All that which we call the *attributes* of God are only ſo many human ways of our conceiving that *abyſſal all*, which can neither be ſpoken, nor conceived by us. And this way of thinking and ſpeaking of God is ſuitable to our capacities, has its good uſe, and helps to expreſs our adoration of him and his perfections. But to conclude, and contend, that there muſt therefore be *different qualities* in God, anſwerable or according to our different ways of thinking and ſpeaking of his perfections, is rather *blaſpheming* than truly glorifying his name and nature. For *omnipotent love*, *inconceivable goodneſs* is that *unity* of God, which we can neither conceive as it is in itſelf, nor divide into this or that.—The importance of the ſubject I have been upon has led me farther than I intended. But for the full illuſtration of it, I refer you to the ſecond part of the *Spirit of Love*. And ſo committing you to a God, who has no will towards you but in and through the life, and death,

death, the ſpirit, and power of the holy Jeſus, to deliver you from all your natural evil, and make you his beloved ſon, in whom he can be well pleaſed to all eternity, I bid you farewel.

July 18, 1757.

LETTER VI.

To a Clergyman in the North of England.

My dear Brother,

LIVE as you now do, in ſuch activity of ſpirit, and multiplied ways of being good, and though you was to live half a century longer, you would ſtick in the ſame mire, and end your life in the ſame complaints as filled your laſt letter to me.—You tell me, that after all the *great change* you have made in *your life*, you find nothing of that *inward good* and ſatisfaction which you have ſo much expected, and more eſpecially ſince you have been a reader of the books recommended by me.

But, Sir, you quite miſtake the matter, you have not changed *your life*; for that which is, and

and only can truly be called *your life*, is in the same state it was when I first knew you. ——Nothing is your *life*, whether it be good or bad, but *that* which WILLS and HUNGERS in you; and your *own* life neither is, nor can be any thing else but this.—Therefore nothing reaches your life, or can make a real change in it, from bad to good, from falseness to truth, but the *right* will and the *right* hunger.—Practise as many rules as you will, take up this or that new opinion, be daily reading better and better books, follow this or that able man, the *bread of life* is not there. Nothing will be fed in you but the vanity and self-conceited righteousness of your own old man. And thus it must be with you, till all that is within you is become *one will* and *one hunger* after that which angels eat in heaven.

But now, if will and hunger are the whole of every natural life, then you may know this great truth with the utmost certainty, namely, that *eating* is the one preservation of every life, from the highest angel in heaven, to the lowest living creature on earth. That which the life eats not, that the life has not. Now every thing that lives on earth is a birth or production of the astral elementary *fire*, *light*, and *spirit*, to which water is always essential, and it continues in life, tastes and enjoys the good of its life, no longer than these powers and virtues of the stars and elements

ments are *eſſentially* and continually eaten by it.

It is juſt ſo with the immortal heavenly life of the ſoul, it is a birth of thoſe ſame powers, in their higheſt glory, in the *inviſible world*; a world, where the triune deity of Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, brings forth a triune glorious habitation for itſelf of fire, light, and ſpirit, opening an infinity of wonders, births and beauties, in a chryſtal tranſparent ſea, called the kingdom of heaven.

Out of theſe powers, or out of this kingdom of heaven, are the births of all holy angelic creatures; nothing lives or moves in them, but that fire, light, and ſpirit, which comes as a birth from Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and nothing feeds, keeps up, and exalts this heavenly fire, light, and ſpirit, but the hidden, inconceivable, ſupernatural trinity, which is before, and deeper than all nature, and can only manifeſt itſelf, and communicate its goodneſs, by ſuch an outward birth of its own unapproachable glory.—And here you may find a glorious meaning of thoſe words of our Lord, ſaying, *My kingdom is not of this world*, becauſe it is a kingdom of thoſe heavenly powers of the triune God, which give food and nouriſhment, purity and perfection to the fire, light, and ſpirit of thoſe divine creatures, which are to be holy,

as

as he is holy, perfect as he is perfect, in his own heavenly kingdom.

Here therefore, in this spiritual eating of that same *invisible* food, which gives life, and perfection of life to all the angels of God, and not in any human contrivances, or activity of your own, are you to place your all as to the change of your life; it all consists in the right *hunger*, and the right *food*, and in nothing else.

The fall of *Adam*, and the origin of all sin and misery, began in his lust and hunger after the knowledge of good and evil in the kingdom of this world. By this he left and lost the food which heaven gives. He died to all the influences and enjoyments of his first fire, light, and spirit, which were his vital union with God in the kingdom of heaven. —All the evil that was hid in this earthly creation, and its numerous creatures, opened and diffused itself with all the power of a poisonous food, through his whole soul and body. But in all this nothing more came upon him, or was done to him, than that which his own hunger had eat.—Here you have the fullest demonstration, how every change in the *life* of man is and only can be made, namely, by *hungering* and *eating*.—*Adam* had not fell, had known no death or extinction of that heavenly fire, light, and spirit which was his first birth in God, but be-

becauſe he hungered after the ſtate of the animal life in this world, which has no other fire, light, and ſpirit in it, but that which gives a tranſitory life, of diverſe contrary luſts and appetites, to all the beaſts, birds, and inſects.

This is the doctrine of the Old Teſtament, concerning the power of hunger and eating in the firſt *Adam*.—On the other hand, in conformity to this, and in full proof of the truth of it that it muſt have been ſo, the ſecond *Adam*, the Lord from heaven, in the New Teſtament has declared, that hunger and eating is that alone which can help fallen man to that firſt heavenly fire, light, and ſpirit, with the ſpiritual fleſh and blood that belonged to it, ſaying again and again, in a variety of the ſtrongeſt expreſſions, this great truth, That except a man eat his fleſh and drink his blood, he hath no life in him, that is, no life of that celeſtial body and blood which *Adam* loſt, and which alone can live in the fire, light, and ſpirit of heaven.

Every ſpirit that is creaturely, and every deſire of the ſpirit, has always ſomething bodily as its own birth. No ſpiritual creature can begin to be but by beginning to be bodily.—For creaturely exiſtence and bodily exiſtence is the ſame thing; the ſpirit is not, cannot be in the *form* of a creature, till it has its body; and its body is the manifeſtation of ſpirit, both to itſelf and other beings.

Live in the love, the patience, the meekneſs, and humility of Chriſt, and then the celeſtial, tranſparent, ſpiritual body of Chriſt's fleſh and blood is continually forming itſelf, and growing in and from and about your ſoul, till it comes to the fullneſs of the ſtature in Chriſt Jeſus; and this is your true, ſubſtantial, vital eating the fleſh, and drinking the blood of Chriſt, which will afterwards become your body of glory to all eternity.—And though your aſtral reaſon, and outward ſenſes, whilſt you are in *Adam*'s bodily fleſh, know nothing of this inward body of Chriſt, yet there it is as ſurely as you have the love, the patience, the meekneſs, and humility of Chriſt; for where the true ſpirit of Chriſt is, there is his true ſpiritual body.

On the other hand, live to ſelfiſhneſs, to diabolical pride, wrath, envy, and covetouſneſs, and then nothing can hinder theſe tempers from forming within you ſuch a ſpiritual body to your ſoul, as that which devils have, and dwell, and work in.

Be as unwilling as you will, through learned wiſdom, or fear of enthuſiaſm, to believe this, your unbelief can laſt no longer than till *Adam*'s fleſh and blood leave you, and then as ſure as your ſoul lives, you will and muſt have it living, either in the ſpiritual body of fallen angels, or in the ſpiritual body of the redeeming Jeſus.—Oh, ſir, trifle away no more

more time in many matters, your first spiritual body must come again. Without it you are the very man, that came to the marriage feast not *having on a wedding garment*.—He was bound hands and feet, and cast into utter darkness, that is, he was the chained prisoner of his own dark, hellish, spiritual body, which had been all his life growing up in him from that which his soul had daily eat and hungered after, and so was become those very chains of darkness, under which the fallen angels are reserved unto the judgment of the great day.

Now there is no being saved, or preserved from this body of chains and darkness, but by the one hunger and thirst after righteousness that is in Christ Jesus, and by eating that which begets heavenly spiritual flesh and blood to the soul.—The two trees of Paradise, with their two fruits, *viz.* of death to the eater of one, and life to the eater of the other, were infallible signs, and full proofs, that from the beginning to the end of the world, death and life, happiness and misery, can proceed from nothing else but that which the lust and hunger of the soul chuseth for its food. Now spiritual eating is by the mouth of desire, and desire is nothing else but will and hunger, therefore that which you will and hunger after, that you are continually eating, whether it be good or bad, and that, be it which it will,

forms the *ſtrength* of your life, or which is the ſame thing, forms the *body* of your ſoul. If you have many wills and many hungers, all that you eat is only the food of ſo many ſpiritual diſeaſes, and burdens your ſoul with a complication of inward diſtempers.—And under this working of ſo many wills it is that religious people have no more good or health, and ſtrength from the true religion, than a man who has a complication of bodily diſtempers has from the moſt healthful food. For no will or hunger, be it turned which way it will, or ſeem ever ſo ſmall or trifling, is without its effect.—For as we can have nothing but as our will works, ſo we muſt have always ſome effect from it.—It cannot be *inſignificant*, becauſe nothing is *ſignificant* but that which it does.

Do not now ſay, that you have this *one will* and *one hunger*, and yet find not the food of life by it.—For as ſure as you are forced to complain, ſo ſure it is that you have it not.——*Not my will, but thine be done*; when this is the *one will* of the ſoul, all complaints are over, then it is that *patience* drinks water of life out of every cup; and to every craving of the old man, this one hunger continually ſays, *I have meat to eat that ye know nothing of*.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, is the one will and one hunger, that feeds the ſoul with

with the life-giving bread of heaven. This will is always fulfilled, it cannot poſſibly be ſent empty away, for God's kingdom muſt manifeſt itſelf with all its riches in that ſoul which wills nothing elſe; it never was, nor can be loſt, but by the will that ſeeks ſomething elſe. Hence you may know with the utmoſt certainty, that if you have no inward peace, if religious comfort is ſtill wanting, it is becauſe you have more wills than one. For the multiplicity of wills is the very eſſence of fallen nature; and all its evil, miſery, and ſeparation from God lie in it; and as ſoon as you return to and allow only this one will, you are returned to God, and muſt find the bleſſedneſs of his kingdom within you.

Give yourſelf up to ever ſo many good works, read, preach, pray, viſit the ſick, build hoſpitals, cloath the naked, *&c.* yet if any thing goes along with theſe, or in the doing of them you have any thing elſe that you will and hunger after, but that *God's kingdom may come, and his will be done*, they are not the works of the New-born from above, and ſo cannot be his life-giving food.—For the new creature in Chriſt is that one will and one hunger that was in Chriſt; and therefore where that is wanting, there is wanting that new creature, which alone can have his converſation, which alone can daily eat and drink at God's table, receiving in all that it does

continual life from *every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

From what word and from what mouth of God? Why only from that hidden, ſupernatural power of the triune Deity, which *ſpeaks* and *breathes* continual nouriſhment to that heavenly fire, light, and ſpirit, in and from which all that are about the throne of God have their *inward joy* above all thought, and their *outward glory*, that can only be figured, or hinted to us by pearls, ſapphires, and rainbow beauties.

It is from this power of the triune God, working in the fire, light, ſpirit, and ſpiritual water, or body of your new-born creature, that all the good, and comfort, and joy of religion, which you want, are to be found, and found by nothing but the reſurrection of that divine and heavenly nature, which came forth in the firſt man.

Do not take theſe to be too high flown words, for they are no higher than the truth; for if that which is in you is not as high as heaven, you never will come there. —That heavenly fire, light, and ſpirit, which make the angelic life to be all divine, muſt as certainly be your inward likeneſs to God; and that which God is and works in angels, that he muſt be and work in you, or you can never be like to, or equal with them, as Chriſt has ſaid.—To be outwardly glori-

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ous as they are, you must stay till this corruptible shall have put on incorruption; but to have the same inward glory of the same celestial fire, light, and spirit, burning, shining, and breathing in your inward man as angels have, belongs to you, as born at first of the triune breath of the living God, and born again of Christ out of *Adam's* death, to have and be all that by a wonder of redemption, which was your divine birthright at first by a wonder of creation.

And now, my dear friend, chuse your side: Would you be honourable in church or state, put on the whole armour of this world, praise that which man praises, cloath yourself with all the graces and perfections of the *Belles Lettres*, and be an orator, and critic, as fast as ever you can, and above all, be strong in the power of flattering words.

But if the other side is your choice; would you be found in Christ, and know the power of his resurrection; would you taste the powers of the world to come, and find the continual influences of the triune God, feeding and keeping up his divine life in your triune soul, you must give up all for that *one will* and *one hunger*, which keeps the angels of God in their full feasts of ever new and never-ceasing delights, in the nameless boundless riches of eternity.

Think it not hard, or too ſevere a reſtraint, to have but one will and one hunger; it is no harder a reſtraint than to be kept from all that can bring forth pain and ſorrow to your ſoul; no greater ſeverity than to be excluded from every place but the kingdom of God.—For to have but this one will and one hunger, is to have every evil of life, and all enemies put under your feet. It is to have done with every thing that can defile, betray, diſappoint, or hurt that eternal nature, which muſt have its life within you.—On the other hand, every thing that is not the effect and fruit of this one will and one hunger, but added to your life by a ſelfiſh will and worldly hunger, muſt ſooner or later be torn from you with the utmoſt ſmart, or become food for that gnawing worm which dieth not.

Do you aſk, How are you to come at this one will, and one hunger? I refer you to no power of your own, and yet refer you to that which is within yourſelf.

Angels in heaven are not good and happy by any thing they can *do* to themſelves, but ſolely by that which is *done* to them.—Now that holy ſpirit which does God's will in heaven, and is the goodneſs and happineſs of all its inhabitants, that ſame ſpirit is every man's portion upon earth, and the gift of God within him.—It is but loſt labour to ſtrive by any power of your reaſon, or ſelf-activity,

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to work up this one will and one hunger within you, or to kindle the true ardency of a divine desire by any thing that your natural man can do. This is as impossible, as for fallen *Adam* to have been his own redeemer, or a dead man to give life to himself.—The one will and one hunger, which alone can eat the true nourishment of the divine life, is nothing else but the *divine nature* within you, which died in *Adam* no other death, but that of being suppressed and buried for a while under a load and multiplicity of earthly wills.

Hence it is, that nothing can put an end to this multiplicity of wills in fallen man, which is his death to God, nothing can be the resurrection of the divine nature within him, which is his only salvation, but the Cross of Christ, not that wooden cross on which he was crucified, but that cross on which he was crucified through the whole course of his life in the flesh. It is our fellowship with him on this cross, through the whole course of our lives, that is our union with him, it alone gives power to the divine nature within us, to arise out of its death, and breathe again in us in one will and one hunger after nothing but God.

To be like-minded with Christ is to live in every contrariety to self, the world, the flesh, and the devil, as he did; this is our belonging

longing to him, our being one with him, having life from him, and washing our robes in the blood of the Lamb. For then, and then only, are we washed and cleansed by his blood, when we drink his blood, and we drink his blood, when we willingly drink of the cup that he drank of.

Again, not to be like-minded with Christ is to be separated from him.—To have another mind than he had, is to be in the state of those who crucified him. Such as the Redeemer was, such are they that are redeemed. —As *Adam* was, such are they that are born of him.—Life from *Adam*, and life from Christ, is the one single thing that makes the one our destroyer, the other our redeemer.— But to have done, cast not about in your mind, how you are to have the one will and one hunger which is always eating at God's table, and continually fed with the bread of life; the thing is already done to your hands. *I am the way, the truth, and the life*, saith Christ, the same as if he had said, the *way* is no where, the *truth* is no where, the *life* is no where, but in me. What room therefore for any learned contrivances, or further enquiry about the matter? Follow Christ in the denial of *all the wills of self*, and then all is put away that separates you from God: the heaven-born new creature will come to life in you, which alone knows and enjoys the

the things of God, and has his daily food of gladneſs in that manifold BLESSED, and BLESSED, which Chriſt preached on the mount.

Tell me then no more of your new ſkill in *Hebrew* words, of your *Paris* editions of all the antient fathers, your compleat collection of the councils, commentators, and church hiſtorians, *&c. &c.* Did Chriſt mean any thing like this, when he ſaid, *I am the way, the truth, and the life?* Did the apoſtle mean any thing like this, when he ſaid, *No man can call Jeſus Lord, but by the Holy Ghoſt?* Great, good, and divine teachers, you ſay, were many of the fathers. I ſay nothing to it, but that much more great, good, and divine is he, who is always teaching within you, ever ſtanding and knocking at the door of your heart, with the words of eternal life.

You perhaps may aſk, why do I go on writing books myſelf, if there is but one true and divine teacher? I anſwer, Though there is but one bridegroom that can furniſh the bleſſing of the marriage feaſt, yet his ſervants are ſent out to invite the gueſts. This is the unalterable difference between Chriſt's teaching, and the teaching of thoſe who only publiſh the glad tidings of him. They are not the bridegroom, and therefore have not the bridegroom's voice. They are not the *light*, but only ſent to bear witneſs of it. And as the *baptiſt* ſaid, *he muſt increaſe*,

increaſe, but I muſt decreaſe; ſo every faithful teacher ſaith of his doctrine, It muſt decreaſe and end as ſoon as it has led to the true teacher.

All that I have wrote for near thirty years, has been only to ſhew, that we have no maſter but Chriſt, nor can have any living divine knowledge but from his holy nature born and revealed in us. Not a word in favour of *Jacob Behmen*, but becauſe, above every writer in the world, he has made all that is found in the kingdom of grace and the kingdom of nature, to be one continual demonſtration, that *dying* to ſelf to be *born again* of Chriſt is the one only poſſible ſalvation of the ſons of fallen *Adam*.

But I will have done, as ſoon as I have given you a little piece of hiſtory, which your friend *Academicus* has given of himſelf: "When I had, ſays he, taken my degrees in "the univerſity, I conſulted ſeveral great di- "vines to put me in a method of ſtudying "divinity. It would take up near half a day "to tell you the work which my learned "friends cut out for me. One told me, "that *Hebrew* words are all; that they muſt "be read without points, and then the Old "Teſtament is an opened book. He recom- "mended to me a cart load of lexicons, cri- "ticks, and commentators upon the *Hebrew* "Bible.—Another tells me, the *Greek* Bible

"is

" is the beſt, that it corrects the *Hebrew* in
" many places, and refers me to a large num-
" ber of books learnedly written in defence of
" it. Another tells me, that church-hiſtory
" is the main matter, that I muſt begin with
" the firſt fathers, and follow them through
" every age, not forgetting to take the *lives*
" of the *Roman* emperors along with me, as
" ſtriking great light into the ſtate of the
" church in their times. Then I muſt have
" recourſe to all the councils held, and the
" canons made in every age: which would
" enable me to ſee with my own eyes the
" great corruptions of the council of *Trent*.
" Another, who is not very fond of ancient
" matters, but wholly bent upon *rational*
" Chriſtianity, tells me, I need go no higher
" than the *Reformation*; that *Calvin* and
" *Cranmer* were very great men; that *Chilling-*
" *worth* and *Locke* ought always to lie upon
" my table; that I muſt get an entire ſet of
" thoſe learned volumes wrote againſt po-
" pery in king *James*'s reign; and alſo be
" well verſed in all the diſcourſes, which
" Mr. *Boyle's* and lady *Moyer*'s lectures have
" produced; and then, ſays he, you will be
" a match for our greateſt enemies, which are
" *popiſh* prieſts, and modern deiſts. My tu-
" tor is very *liturgycal*; he deſired me, of
" all things, to get all the collections that I
" can of the *antient* liturgies, and all the au-
" thors

" thors that treat of such matters, who, says
" he, are very learned and very numerous.
" He has been many years making observa-
" tions upon them, and is now clear as to
" the time when certain little particles got
" entrance into the liturgies, and others were
" by degrees dropt.—He has a friend abroad
" in search of antient MSS. liturgies; for by
" the by, said he at parting, I have some sus-
" picion that our Sacrament of the Lord's
" Supper is *essentially* defective, for want
" of having a little water mixed with the
" wine.—Another learned friend told me,
" that the *Clementine Constitutions* is the book
" of books; and that all that lies loose and
" scattered in the New Testament stands there
" in its true order and form. And though he
" will not say, that Dr. *Clarke* and Mr.
" *Whiston* are in the right, yet it might be
" useful to me to read all the *Arian* and *So-*
" *cinian* writers, provided I stood upon my
" guard, and did it with caution.—The last
" person I consulted, advised me to get all
" the histories of the rise and progress of he-
" resies, and of the lives and characters of
" heretics—These histories, he said, contract
" the matter, bring truth and error close in
" view; and I should find all that collected
" in a few pages, which would have cost me
" some years to get together. He also de-
" sired me to be well versed in all the *casuist-*
" *tical*

" *tical* writers, and chief *ſchoolmen*, for they " debate matters to the bottom, diſſect eve- " ry virtue and every vice, and ſhew how " near they may come together without " touching. And this knowledge, he ſaid, " might be very uſeful when I came to be a " *pariſh* prieſt.

" Following the advice of all theſe coun- " ſellors, as well as I could, I lighted my " candle early in the morning, and put " it out late at night. In this labour I had " been ſweating for ſome years, till *Ruſticus*, " at my firſt acquaintance with him, ſeeing " my way of life, ſaid to me, had you lived " about ſeventeen hundred years ago, you " had ſtood juſt in the ſame place as I ſtand " now—I cannot read, and therefore, ſays " he, all theſe hundreds of thouſands of " doctrine and diſputing books, which theſe " ſeventeen hundred years have produced, " ſtand not in my way; they are the ſame " thing to me as if they had never been. " And, had you lived at the time mention- " ed, you had juſt eſcaped them all, as I do " now, becauſe, though you are a very good " reader, there were then none of them to " be read.—Could you therefore be con- " tent to be one of the primitive Chriſtians, " who were as good as any that have been " ſince, you may ſpare all this labour.—It " is not eaſy for me, ſays *Academicus*, to tell

" you

" you how much good I received from this
" ſimple inſtruction of honeſt maſter *Ruſti-*
" *cus*.—What project was it, to be graſping
" after the knowledge of all the opinions,
" doctrines, diſputes, hereſies, ſchiſms, *&c.*
" which ſeventeen hundred years had
" brought forth through all the extent of
" the Chriſtian world! What project this, in
" order to be a *divine*, that is, in order to bear
" true witneſs to the power of Chriſt, as a
" deliverer from the evil of earthly fleſh and
" blood, and death and hell, and a raiſer of
" a new birth and life from above! for as
" this is the divine work of Chriſt, ſo he on-
" ly is a true and able *divine*, that can bear
" a faithful teſtimony to this *divine* work of
" Chriſt.—How eaſy was it for me to have
" ſeen, that all this labyrinth of learned en-
" quiry into ſuch a dark thorny wilderneſs of
" notions, facts and opinions, could ſignify
" no more to me now, to my own ſalvation,
" to my intereſt in Chriſt, and obtaining the
" Holy Spirit of God, than if I had lived be-
" fore it had any beginning. But the blind
" appetite of learning gave me no leiſure to
" apprehend ſo plain a truth.—Books of di-
" vinity indeed I have not done with, but
" will eſteem none to be ſuch, but thoſe
" that make known to my heart the *inward*
" *power and redemption of Jeſus Chriſt*. Nor
" will I ſeek for any thing even from ſuch

" books,

" books, but that which I ask of God in " prayer, *viz.* How better to know, more to " abhor and resist the evil that is in my *own* " *nature*, and how to obtain a *supernatural* " *birth* of the divine life brought forth within " me. All besides this is *pushpin**:

God be with you.

March 5, 1753.

* Way to Divine Knowledge, p. 100.

LETTER VII.

In Answer to a Question.

YOU tell me, Sir, that after a twenty years zeal and labour in matters of religion, it has turned to so little account, that you are forced most earnestly to desire a speedy answer to this question, *Where shall you go, or what shall you do, to be in the truth?*

Let me first premise thus much. Every man in his fallen state has all that in him, though in a state of death and hiddeness, which was the *living* glory and perfection of the first created man. Just as the *root* of the lily, in the winter's cold, hath all that in it, though as in a state of death, which was the glory and beauty of the summer's flower.

What is hidden in the root of the lily, lies no longer in its ſeeming death, than till the ſpring-ſun calls forth its life.—Now one *divine diſpenſation* after another is to do that ſame to the fallen ſoul, which the ſpring and daily advancing ſun do to the lily root; namely, to call it out of its ſtate of death, and make ſomething of its firſt glory come to life, and ſpring forth out of it. Hence it is, that *the kingdom of God* (which was that to which *Adam* died) *is like to treaſure hid in a field*; and again, *the kingdom of God is within you.* But this could not be true, unleſs all that glory, which *Adam* loſt, was ſtill preſerved as a *ſeed* or ſhut up *root* of life within him: and all this, through the mercy and *free grace* of God, who foreſeeing the fall of *Adam*, willed that a *ſeed* of his firſt glory ſhould be preſerved in him; declared and made known to him by a *ſeed of the woman*, which through the word made fleſh, ſhould, in ſpite of death and hell, grow up to the *fullneſs of the ſtature in Chriſt Jeſus.*

And as the kingdom of heaven is every man's treaſure, as ſurely within him as his own ſoul, ſo that which hides and covers it from us is that *awakened, beaſtial* life, which is called *Adam* in us, and in which, the immortal ſoul, that was born for heaven, is wedded to the *luſts of the fleſh*, the *luſt of the eyes*, and the *pride of life*, and ſubject to the workings of

of that Satanical nature, which our Lord calls the *prince of this world*.—And thus it is, that every man comes into this world in a two-fold ſtate: *Adam* and *Chriſt* are both born in him.—And if this was not the ſtate of man, nothing within you would, or could aſk, as you have done, or have any anxiety after the truth. And your being either led from this true knowledge of your ſtate, or having never been ſenſible of it, is the reaſon of your having made ſo many religious enquiries in vain, both from yourſelf, and other people.—For nothing can tell you the truth, or eſtabliſh you in a juſt and ſolid diſcernment of right from wrong, in doctrines, opinions, and practices of religion, but this home knowledge of yourſelf, namely, that Chriſt and *Adam* are not only both of them *eſſentially* within you, but the *whole* of you; that nothing is life or ſalvation, but that which is the life and growth of Chriſt in you; and that all that is done from the *life*, the *power*, and *natural* capacity of the *Adamical* nature, is heatheniſh, is mere vanity and death, however glorioufly ſet forth by the natural gifts of wit and learning.

Religion has no good in it, but as it is the revival and quickening of that divine nature, which your firſt father had from God, and nothing can revive it but that which firſt created it. God is no otherwiſe your God, but

as he is the God of your life, manifested in it; and he can be no otherwise the God of your life, but as his spirit is living within you. Satan is no other way knowable by you, or can have any other fellowship with you, but as his evil spirit works and manifests itself along with the workings of your own spirit.—*Resist the devil, and he will flee from you*; but he is no where to be resisted, but as a working spirit *within you*, therefore to resist the devil is to turn from the evil thoughts and motions that arise within you. *Turn to God, and he will turn to you:* but God is an universal spirit, which you cannot locally turn to or from; therefore to turn to God, is to cleave to those good thoughts and motions which proceed from his Holy Spirit, dwelling and working in you.—This is the God of your life, to whom you are to adhere, listen, and attend, and this is your worshipping him in spirit and in truth. And that is the *devil that goeth about as a roaring lion*, who has no voice, but that which he speaks within you. Therefore, my friend, be at home, and keep close to that which passes within you; for be it what it will, whether it be a good in which you *delight*, or an evil at which you *grieve*, you could have neither the one, nor the other, but because a holy God of light and love is essentially dwelling in you. Seek therefore for no other road, nor call any thing the way

way to God, but ſolely that, which his eternal all-creating WORD and SPIRIT work within you. For could any thing elſe have been man's way to God, the WORD *had not been made fleſh.*

The laſt words in your queſtion, viz. *To be in the truth,* are well expreſſed, for to be in the truth is the finiſhed ſtate of man returning to God, thus declared by Chriſt himſelf, *Ye ſhall know the truth, and the truth ſhall make you free:* free from the blindneſs and deluſion of your own natural reaſon, and free from forms, doctrines and opinions, which others would impoſe upon you. To be in truth is to be where the firſt holy man was when he came forth in the image and likeneſs of God.——When he loſt paradiſe he loſt the truth; and all that he felt, knew, ſaw, loved, and liked of the earthly beaſtial world, into which he was fallen, was but mere ſeparation from God, a vail upon his heart, and ſcales upon his eyes.—Nothing of his *firſt truth,* could be ſpoken of to him, even by God himſelf, but under the vail of earthly things, types and ſhadows. *The law was given by Moſes*; but *Moſes* had a vail upon his face; the *law* was a vail, *prophecy* was a vail, Chriſt *crucified* was a vail, and all was a vail, till *grace and truth came by Jeſus Chriſt* in the POWER of his HOLY SPIRIT. Therefore to be in the truth *as it is in Jeſus,* is to be

come from under the vail, to have paſſed through all thoſe *diſpenſations*, which would never have begun, but that they might end in a Chriſt *ſpiritually* revealed and *eſſentially* formed in the ſoul. So that now, in this *laſt diſpenſation* of God, which is the firſt truth itſelf reſtored, nothing is to be thought of, truſted to, or ſought after, but God's *immediate continual* working in the ſoul by his Holy Spirit. This, Sir, is the *where* you are to go, and the *what* you are to do, to be *in the truth*. For the truth as it is in Jeſus is nothing elſe but Chriſt come in the ſpirit, and his coming in the ſpirit is nothing elſe but the firſt *loſt life* of God quickened and revealed again in the ſoul.—Every thing ſhort of this has only the nature of outward type and figure, which, in its beſt ſtate, is only for a time.——If therefore you look to any thing but the ſpirit, ſeek to any power but that of the ſpirit, expect Chriſt to be your Saviour any other way, than as he is *ſpiritually* born in you, you go back from the *grace* and *truth which came by Jeſus*, and can at beſt be only a *legal Jew*, or a ſelf-righteous *Phariſee*; there is no getting farther than theſe ſtates, but by being born of the ſpirit, living by the ſpirit, as his child, his inſtrument, and holy temple in which he dwells, and works all his good pleaſure.—Drop this full adherence to and dependence upon the ſpirit, act as in your own ſphere, be ſomething of yourſelf, and through

through your own wiſdom, *&c.* and then, though all that you ſay or do is with the outward words of the *ſpiritual* goſpel, and in the outward practices of the *ſpiritual* apoſtles, yet for all this you are but there, where thoſe were who worſhipped God with the blood of bulls and goats; for [N. B.] Nothing but the ſpirit of God can worſhip God in ſpirit and in truth.

But you will perhaps ſay, that you are ſtill but where you was, becauſe you know not how to find the *continual guidance* of the holy ſpirit.—If you know how to find your own thoughts, you need not be at a loſs to find the ſpirit of God. For you have not a thought within you, but is either from the good of the *ſpirit*, or from the evil of the *fleſh*. Now the good and the evil that are within you, and always more or leſs ſenſible by turns, do each of them teach you the *ſame work* and preſence of the ſpirit of God. For the good could not appear as good, nor the evil be *felt* as evil, but becauſe the *immediate* working of the ſpirit of God *creates*, or *manifeſts* this difference between them, and therefore be in what ſtate you will, the power of God's ſpirit within you equally manifeſts itſelf to you; and to find the *immediate*, *continual*, eſſential working of the ſpirit of God within you, you need only know what good and evil are felt within you. For all the good that is in any thought or deſire is ſo much of God within

you, and whilſt you adhere to, and follow a good thought, you follow, or are led by the ſpirit of God. And on the other hand, all that is ſelfiſh and wicked in thought, or affection, is ſo much of the ſpirit of Satan within you, which would not be known, or felt as evil, but becauſe it is contrary to the *immediate continual* working of the ſpirit of God within you. Turn therefore inwards, and all that is within you will demonſtrate to you the preſence and power of God in your ſoul, and make you find and feel it with the ſame certainty, as you find and feel your own thoughts. And what is beſt of all, by thus doing you will never be without a living ſenſe of the *immediate* guidance and inſpiration of the Holy Spirit, always equal to your dependence upon it, always leading you from ſtrength to ſtrength in your inward man, till all your knowledge of good and evil is become nothing elſe but a mere love of the one, and mere averſion to the other.—For the *one work* of the ſpirit of God is to diſtinguiſh the good and evil that are within you, not as in notion, but by affection; and when you are wholly given up to this new-creating work of God, ſo as to ſtay your mind upon it, abide with it, and expect all from it, This, my friend, will be your returning to the rock from whence you was hewn, your drinking at the fountain of living water, your walking

walking with God, your living by faith, your putting on Christ, your continual hearing the WORD of God, your eating the bread that came down from heaven, your supping with Christ, and following the Lamb wherever he goeth.

For all these seeming different things will be found in every man, according to his measure, who is wholly given up to and depending upon the blessed work of God's spirit in his soul.

But your mistake, and that of most Christians, lies in this; you would be good by some outward means, you would have *methods*, *opinions*, *forms*, and *ordinances* of religion alter and raise your fallen nature, and create in you a new heart and a new spirit; that is to say, you would be good in a way that is altogether *impossible*, for goodness cannot be brought into you from *without*, much less by any thing that is creaturely, or the action of man; this is as impossible, as for the flesh to *sanctify* the spirit, or for things temporal, to *give life* to things that are eternal.

The image and likeness of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, are in every man, *antecedent* to every outward work or action that can proceed from him: it is God thus within him, that is the sole cause that any thing can be called godly, that is done, observed or prac-

practiſed by him. If it were not ſo, man would only have his *being* from God, but his *goodneſs* from himſelf.

All man's *outward good* works are only like his *outward good* words; he is not good becauſe he is frequent in the uſe of them, they bring no goodneſs into him, nor are of any worth in themſelves, but as a good and godly ſpirit, ſpeaks forth itſelf in the ſound of them. This is the caſe of every outward creaturely thing, or work of man, be it of what kind it will, either *hearing*, *praying*, *ſinging*, or *preaching*, *&c.* or practiſing any outward rules and obſervances; they have only the goodneſs of the outward *Jew*, nay, are as vain as *ſounding braſs*, and tinkling cymbals, unleſs they be ſolely the work and fruits of the ſpirit of God: for the *divine nature* is that alone which can be the power to any good work, either in man or angel.

When a man firſt finds himſelf ſtirred up with religious zeal, what does he generally do? He turns all his thoughts *outwards*, he runs after *this* or *that* man, he is at the beck of every *new opinion*, and thinks only of finding the truth by reſting in this or that method, or ſociety of Chriſtians. Could he find a man that did not want to have him of his party and opinion, that turned him from himſelf, and the teachings of man to a God, not as hiſto-

hiſtorically read of in books, or preached of in this or that ſociety, but to a God *eſſentially* living and working in every ſoul, him he might call a man of God, as leading him from himſelf to God, as ſaving him from many vain wanderings, from fruitleſs ſearchings into a council of *Trent*, a ſynod of *Dort*, an *Augſburg* confeſſion, an *aſſembly's* catechiſm, or a *thirty-nine* articles. For had he an hundred articles, if they were any thing elſe but a hundred calls to a Chriſt come in the ſpirit, to a God within him as the only poſſible light and teacher of his mind, it would be a hundred times better for him to be without them.—For all man's blindneſs and miſery lies in this, that he has loſt the knowledge of God as *eſſentially* living within him, and by falling under the power of an earthly beaſtial life, thinks only of God as living in ſome other world, and ſo ſeeks only by notions to ſet up an image of an abſent God, inſtead of worſhipping the God of life and power, in whom he lives, moves, and has his being. —Whoever therefore teaches you to expect great things from this or that ſort of opinions, or calls you to any thing as *ſaving* and *redeeming*, but the manifeſtation of God in your own ſoul, through a birth of the holy nature of Chriſt within you, is totally ignorant of the whole nature both of the *fall* and the *redemption* of man. For the *firſt* is nothing elſe,

or

or less than a *death* to the divine life or Christ-like nature, which lived in the first man; and the *other* is nothing else, but Christ new-born, formed, and revealed again in man, as he was at the first. These two great truths are the most strongly asserted by Christ, saying, *If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.* Let him *deny himself* is the fullest declaration, and highest proof, that he has lost his *first divine* and heavenly nature, that he is not *that self* which came first from God, or he could not be called to deny it.—Say, if you will, that he has not lost that first heavenly life in God, and then you must say, that our Lord calls him to deny, crucify, and renounce that holy and godlike self, which was the first gift of God to him.

To read whole libraries on these matters is only to be bewildered in the strife of fictions, and contradictions about them. But to read this one single line of Christ is to be led into the open full truth of the whole nature, both of the fall and redemption. And indeed, if we were but freed from the Babel of opinions which have so long confounded the first truths of the gospel, it would be plain from every part of it, that nothing could be called the *fall* of man, but his loss of the divine life or nature, nor any thing be called his *redemption*, or the real means of it, but

solely

ſolely that which God *is* and *does* in him. For what can be a good, or work good in man, but God, or the divine nature in him? All the divine truths that ever came from God ſpeak only to the *pearl* of the divine nature that is *hidden* in our *earthly field* of fleſh and blood, becauſe nothing elſe wants them, or has any capacity to receive them; that which is divine can only receive the divine things from God. And thence it is, that unleſs a *man be born again from above*, it is not poſſible for him to *ſee, or enter into the kingdom of God*, that is, the divine life muſt ariſe again, in the power of a new birth, or there is nothing in fallen man that can partake of the kingdom of God. And the reaſon is, becauſe *the kingdom of God is righteouſneſs, and peace, and joy, in the Holy Ghoſt*, and therefore not poſſible to be any where but where it proceeds from the Holy Ghoſt. Thou *ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy ſoul, with all thy mind, and with all thy ſtrength.* Now what is this God that you are thus to love? Is it ſome *abſtract idea* that learned men have helped you to form of him? No ſuch thing. This would be but a poor fiction of God, and a poor fiction of love.—God is *all good*, the *only* good, and there is nothing good beſides him, therefore to love God with all your heart, *&c.* is to love *all goodneſs*, and to love *nothing*

nothing elſe but goodneſs, and then, and only then, do you love God with all your *heart*, and *ſoul*, and *ſtrength*.—But now to what purpoſe could this precept of ſuch a love be given to man, unleſs *he eſſentially* partook of the divine nature? For to be in heart, and ſoul, and ſpirit, all love of God within you, is ſurely too abſurd for any one to believe. So ſure therefore as this precept came from truth itſelf, ſo ſure is it that every man (however loath to hear of any thing but pleaſures and enjoyments in this vain ſhadow of a life) has yet a divine nature concealed within him, which, when ſuffered to hear the calls of God, will know the voice of its heavenly Father, and long to do his will on earth as it is done in heaven.

The concluſion then is this, if to love God with your whole heart and ſoul is to love *all goodneſs*, and *nothing elſe but goodneſs*; and if all that is done without this love, whether in religious duties, or common life, is but mere *ſeparation from* God, then it muſt be the groſſeſt blindneſs to believe you can have any love of God, or goodneſs in any duties you perform, any further, or in any other degree, than as the eternal Holy Spirit of God lives and loves in you.

Again, to ſee the divinity of man's original, you need only read theſe words: *Be ye perfect*,

perfect, as your father which is in heaven is perfect. For what could man have to do with the perfection of God, as the rule of his life, unless the truth and reality of the divine nature was in him? Could there be any reasonableness in this precept, or any fitness to call us to be good, as God is good, unless there was that in us which is in God? or to call us to the perfection of an *heavenly father*, If we were not the real children of his *heavenly nature?* Might it not be as well to bid the *heavy stone* to fly as its *flying father* the eagle doth?

But this precept from the lip of truth is another full proof, that by the *fall* a *death* or suppression is brought upon our first divine life, and also that it is yet in a state capable of being revived again in us. For if it was not in a state of death or suppressed in us, there could be no need of calling us to live according to it; for every being naturally acts according to the life that is manifested in it. Nor could we be called to be heavenly, but because the heavenly nature has its seed in our soul, in a readiness to come to life in us.

Lastly, thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, is another full proof, that God is in us of a truth, and that the Holy Spirit hath as certainly an *essential birth* within us, as the spirit of this world hath. For this precept might as well be given to a *fox* as to a man, if a man

man had not something *quite supernatural* in him. For mere nature, and natural creature, is nothing else but mere self, and can work nothing but to and for itself. And this, not through any corruption or depravity of nature, but because it is nature's best state, and it can be nothing else, either in man or beast.

I say unto you, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use and persecute you, &c. Every word here is demonstration, that nothing but the *new birth from above* can be a Christian. There is no other nature or spirit that can breathe forth this *universal love and benevolence*, but *that same*, which laying aside its own glory, came down from heaven to forgive, to love, to save, and die for a whole world of enemies and sinners.

This is the spirit of Christ, that must as *essentially* live and breathe in you as it did in him, or all exhortations to do as he did, to walk as he walked, are but in vain. The natural man is in full separation from this holiness of life, and though he had more wisdom of words, more depth of literature, than was in *Cicero*, or *Aristotle*, yet would he have as much to die as the grossest publican or vainest pharisee, before he could be in Christ a new creature. For the highest improved natural abilities can as well ascend into heaven, or cloath flesh and blood with

with immortality, as make a man like-minded with Chriſt in any one divine virtue.—And that for this one reaſon, becauſe God and divine goodneſs are inſeparable.

No precept of the goſpel ſuppoſes man to have any power to effect it, or calls you to any natural ability or wiſdom of your own to comply with it. Chriſt and his apoſtles called no man to overcome the corruption and blindneſs of fallen nature by learned cultivation of the mind. The wiſdom of the learned world was the ſame pitiable fooliſhneſs with them as the groſſeſt ignorance. By them they only ſtand thus diſtinguiſhed, the one brings forth a *Publican*, which is often converted to Chriſt, the other a *Phariſee*, that for the moſt part condemns him to be crucified. They (Chriſt and his apoſtles) taught nothing but death, and denial to all ſelf, and the impoſſibility of having any one divine temper but through faith and hope of a new nature, not *born of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*

To ſpeak of the operation of the Holy Spirit as *only an* aſſiſtance, or an *occaſional* aſſiſtance, is as ſhort of the truth as to ſay, that Chriſt ſhall *only aſſiſt* the reſurrection of our bodies. For not a ſpark of any divine virtue can ariſe up in us, but what muſt wholly and ſolely be called forth by that ſame power,

which alone can call our dead bodies out of the duſt and darkneſs of the grave.

If you turn to your own ſtrength to have Chriſtian piety and goodneſs, or are ſo deceived, as to think that learning, or logical abilities, critical acuteneſs, ſkill in languages, church-ſyſtems, rules and orders, articles and opinions, are to do that for you which the ſpirit of Chriſt did, and only could do for the firſt Chriſtians; your diligent reading the hiſtory of the goſpel will leave you as poor, and empty, and dead to the divine life, as if you had been only a diligent reader of the hiſtory of all the religions in the world.—But if all that you truſt to, long after, and depend upon, is that Holy Spirit which alone made the ſcripture-ſaints able *to call Jeſus Lord*; if this be your one faith, and one hope, the divine life, which died in *Adam*, will find itſelf alive again in Chriſt Jeſus. And be aſſured, that nothing but this *new birth* can be the Goſpel Chriſtian, becauſe nothing elſe can poſſibly love, like, do, and be that, which Chriſt preached in his divine ſermon on the *mount*. And be aſſured alſo, that when the ſpirit of Chriſt is the ſpirit that ruleth in you, there will be no *hard ſayings* in the goſpel; but all that the heavenly Chriſt taught in the fleſh will be as meat and drink to you, and you will have no joy but in walking, as he walked, in ſaying, loving, and doing that which

which he ſaid, loved, and did.—And indeed, how can it be otherwiſe? how can notions, doctrines, and opinions about Chriſt, what he was and did, make you in him a new creature? Can any one be made a *Sampſon*, or a *Solomon*, by being well verſed in the hiſtory of what they were, ſaid, or did?

Aſk then, my friend, no more, Where ſhall you go, or what ſhall you do, to be in the truth? For you can have the truth no where but in Jeſus, nor in him any farther, than as his whole nature and ſpirit are born within you.

Farewel.

LETTER VIII.

To a Perſon of Quality.

Madam,

I Had the honour of your ladyſhip's letter, and no want of true regard for your ladyſhip, or the ſubject, has been the occaſion of my delaying this anſwer ſo long. I am in ſome hopes, that the perſon that wanted it, may, by this time, have found ſomething better than it by being left to God and himſelf, and

that I have done more for him by my ſilence, than I ſhould have done by my writing.

To be always tampering with phyſicians, upon every occaſion, is the way to loſe all natural ſoundneſs of health; and to be continually talking, and enquiring about the nature of diſtempers, and the powers of medicines, for the head, the heart, the ſpirits, and nerves, is the way to loſe all true judgment, either of our own ſickneſs or health.

It is much the ſame with regard to our ſpiritual health and conſtitution, we do much hurt to it by running after ſpiritual advice on every occaſion, and wanting the help of ſome *human preſcription* for every fear, ſcruple, or notion, that ſtarts up in our minds, and ſo weaken the true ſtrength of our *ſpiritual conſtitution*, which if left to itſelf would do all that we want to have done.

If it be aſked, What is this *ſoundneſs* of our *ſpiritual conſtitution?* It may be anſwered, that it is a *ſtate or habit of ſuch humble total reſignation of ourſelves to God, as by faith and hope expects all from him alone.* This is the health and ſtrength of our *ſpiritual conſtitution*, and nothing is health in the ſoul but this ſtate.

And if we left all our incidental, accidental, ſickly notions, and imaginations that ſo frequently attack our minds, if we left them to be overcome and done away by the ſtrength of

of our *ſpiritual conſtitution*, [N. B.] we ſhould never fail of ſucceſs.

How this pious and worthy perſon came to think of leaving his pariſh, or what ſcruples occaſioned his doubting whether he ſhould ſtay in it, I cannot gueſs, and therefore can ſay nothing to them. I ſhould have thought that ſuch a change as he found in himſelf, his pariſh and neighbourhood, ſhould have every thing in it, that could render his ſituation comfortable to him.

The greateſt danger that new converts are liable to, eſpecially if they are young, ariſes from their conceiving ſomething great of their converſion, and that great things are to follow from it. Hence they are taken up too much with themſelves, and the ſuppoſed deſigns of God upon them. They enter into reaſonings and conjectures how they ſhall be and do ſomething extraordinary, and ſo loſe that ſimplicity of heart, which ſhould think of nothing but of dying *to ſelf*, that the ſpirit of God might have time and place to create and form all that is wanting in their inward man.

There is nothing more plain and ſimple than the way of religion, if *ſelf* is but kept out of it; and all the perplexities and ſcruples which pious perſons meet with, chiefly ariſe from ſome idea they have formed of a progreſs they ought to make, in order to be *that*

which *self* would be. But piety makes little progreſs till it has no ſchemes of its own, no thoughts or contrivances to be any thing, but a *naked penitent*, left wholly and ſolely in *faith* and *hope* to the divine goodneſs. Every contrivance for human help, from this or that, be it what it will, is at beſt but dropping ſome degree of that fulneſs of faith, and hope, and dependence upon God, which only is, and only can be, our way of finding him to be the ſtrength and God of our life.

Nothing but the life of God, opened by his Holy Spirit within us, can be the renewal of our ſouls, and we ſhall want this renewal no longer, than whilſt we are ſeeking it in ſomething that is not God. The faith that aſcribes all to God, and expects all from him, cannot be diſappointed.

Nothing could hinder the *Centurion* from having that which he aſked of Chriſt, becauſe his heart could thus ſpeak, *Lord, I am not worthy that thou ſhouldeſt come under my roof, ſpeak the word only, and my ſervant ſhall be healed.*

He that has *this ſenſe* of himſelf, and *this faith* in God, is in the truth and perfection of religion: if we knew the goodneſs of this ſtate, we ſhould be always content with the ſimplicity of it, and let every thing elſe come and go, as it would; all is well and ſafe ſo long as the heart reſts all upon God alone. Your lady-

ladyſhip ſays, This worthy perſon *fears his zeal*, and *yet dreads the abatement of it*. It would be better not to indulge a thought about *his own zeal*, or to ſpeak a word of it to any perſon. For if it is godly zeal, it is no more his than it is mine, nor comes any more from him than it does from me; and therefore when he thinks, or ſpeaks of it as *his*, or as ſomething he would be glad to keep in its right ſtate, it is giving way to deluſion, both with regard to himſelf, and the nature of true zeal: for as the *wind bloweth where it liſteth*, ſo it is with him who is driven by true zeal.

I do not wonder that his audience is ſo much affected and increaſed ſince he has preached up the doctrine of regeneration amongſt them. All other preaching paſſes away as a tale that is told, and indeed is nothing better, till it enters into the things within man, brings him to a ſenſibility of the ſtate of his heart, and its want of God's Holy Spirit therein.

How far it may be right for him to comply with their requeſt of viſiting, reading, and expounding the ſcripture to them, I pretend not to ſay:—but only thus much, that it ſeems to be right to be in no anxiety about it, or uſe any reaſoning, either to perſuade himſelf to it or from it, or to put himſelf under any *ſtated rules* about it, but leave it to be

done as he finds himself inwardly stirred up to it, and able out of the abundance of his heart to perform it.

Expounding the scriptures has a fine sound, but I should rather advise such persons to read only in love, and simplicity of heart, such scriptures as need no expounder, but their own heart turned to God. Persons who are come to this inward conviction, that they must live and die under the power of Satan, and of fallen nature, unless by a fulness of faith in Christ they be born again from above, have nothing more to enquire about where, or how Christ is to be found.

They have no other use to make of the scripture, but that of being refreshed and delighted with such passages, as turn and stir up the heart to a fulness of faith, love, and resignation to the blessed guidance and operation of the Holy Spirit of God.

Jan. 10, 1754.

LET-

LETTER IX.

To the Same.

Madam,

MR. *Wesley's* letter did not at all disappoint me. I had no expectation of seeing a better, either with regard to the substance, or to the stile and manner of it. If I knew of any kind of answer that would do him any real good, I should advise it. But to answer it for the good of any one else seems to be quite needless. It does not admit of a serious answer, because there is nothing substantial or properly argumentative in it. And to answer it in the way of ridicule is what I cannot come into, being full as averse to make a mock of him in a religious garb, as to the doing the greatest bodily injury to his person. How far he has answered, or does answer any good ends of providence, or is an instrument in the hands of God, is a matter I meddle not with; only wishing, that every appearance of good, every stirring of zeal, under whatever form it appears, whether in knowledge or ignorance, in wisdom or weakness, may

may be directed and bleſſed by God to the beſt ends it is capable of.

As to myſelf, I ſeem to myſelf to have no other part to act, nor any call to any thing elſe, in this hurry, and ſtruggle of zeal againſt zeal, in ſuch a variety of forms, but only and fully to aſſert the true ground, and largely open all the reaſons of that one inward regeneration, which is equally the one thing needful to every ſect, and the one thing alone that can make every ſect, or method, or outward form, not hurtful to thoſe that adhere to it.

For every outward form, however ſpecious or promiſing, will only help us to be carnally minded, till it is in ſome degree known, to have no other or better nature, than that of the ſhell which helps us to the kernel.

The doctrines I have publiſhed are in their beſt ſtate with regard to the reader, as they ſtand in my books, and will be leſs uſeful to him when they are drawn into controverſy. For this reaſon, I can lend no help to that.

This may perhaps ſeem to your ladyſhip, as if I had too great an opinion of what I had done.—And I believe ſuch a free way of ſpeaking ſometimes in converſation of my own books may have been ſuſpected of ſmelling too much of ſelf-eſteem.—But I can with truth aſſure you, madam, that when I ſpeak of the *fulneſs* and *clearneſs* of my own writings, I feel no other

other ſentiments of ſelf-ſufficiency than when I ſpeak of the goodneſs of my own eyes. Nor do I know how to conſider the one, more than the other, to be any merit of my own; and therefore when any man, great or little, contemns, reproaches, or aſperſes me or my books, as void of ſenſe, truth, and light, I feel no more inward uneaſineſs, or think myſelf any more hurt, than if he had only told the world that my eyes were miſerably bad, and I could ſcarce ſee to read even with the beſt ſpectacles. And ſo I have no deſire controverſially to defend the one more than the other, but contentedly leave them both to be their own proof of what they are.

I was once a kind of oracle with Mr. *Weſley*. I never ſuſpected any thing bad of him, or ever diſcovered any king or degree of falſeneſs or hypocriſy in him.

But during all the time of his intimacy with me, I judged him to be much under the power of his *own ſpirit*, which ſeemed to have the predominance in every good thing or way, that his zeal carried him to.

It was owing to his unwillingneſs or inability to give up his own ſpirit, that he was forced into that falſe and raſh cenſure which he publiſhed in print againſt the myſtics:—as *enemies to good works*, and even tending *to atheiſm*. A cenſure ſo falſe, and regardleſs of right and wrong, as hardly any thing can

can exceed it; which is to be found in a preface of his to a book of hymns.—But no more of this.

Feb. 16, 1756.

LETTER X.

To the Same.

Madam,

THE paſſage in the letter from a pious and very excellent clergyman, as you ſtile him, calls for no regard, either from your ladyſhip or me. More inſignificant words cannot well be put together:—"I "think, ſays he, Mr. *Law* has gone *half a* "*bow-ſhot* too far." If I have ſhot ſo far beyond or beſide the truth, he ſhould have ſhewn *where*, and *why*, and *how*. Without this his words are but a random ſhot at nothing. His reaſon for this cenſure is ſtill worſe, *viz.* "*Becauſe I have touched the heart-ſtring* "*of all ſyſtematical divinity.*" As grievous a charge, as if he had ſaid, that I had ſhook the very foundation of every *Babel* in every country. For not a ſyſtem of divinity, ſince ſyſtems were in being, whether popiſh or proteſtant, deſerves a better name.

His

His next reaſon is, " *Becauſe it ſhould not* " *be touched without ſkill from above.*"

If this gentleman ever preaches from the pulpit concerning the ways of God, and the doctrines of redemption, without ſkill from above, all he ſays will be a *whole bow-ſhot* beſide the matter.

If therefore in touching this point I have touched that which ought not to be touched without ſkill from above, I have taken no bolder a ſtep than he does, every time he mounts the pulpit to give forth the doctrines of Chriſt.

His third reaſon is this, " *I chuſe in my* " *preſent ignorance, as touching the neceſſity and* " *virtue of an outward atonement, to bow down* " *before the awful ſubject.*"

But in truth he ſhould have ſaid, I chuſe to bow down before the awful *heart-ſtring* of all ſyſtematical divinity, which reſolves all the atonement into an *infinite wrath* and *vengeance*, raiſed in the holy deity itſelf, and which would not be appeaſed or ſatisfied by any thing elſe but the ſacrifice of an infinite Son of God. It is by reaſon of this attachment to this heart-ſtring, or rather his having ſo *conſtantly preached* according to it, that he cannot bear a demonſtration of the moſt glorious truth, that either heaven or earth can proclaim, *viz.* that God from eternity to eternity, is mere unchangeable and ever overflowing

ing love; and that nothing but this infinity of never-ceasing, never-changing love, gave the birth, the life, the sufferings, the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, for the salvation of all mankind; because in the whole possible nature of things, nothing else but this *whole process* of a God made man, could have any ability to extinguish the hell and wrath of fallen nature, and give man a second birth of such a life from above, as could for ever and ever have union and communion with the unbeginning, never-ending, never-changing trinity of love.

LETTER XI.

To Mr. *J. T.*

My dear worthy Friend,

WHOM I much love and esteem, your letter, though full of complaints about the state of your heart, was very much according to my mind, and gives me great hopes that God will carry on the good work he has begun in you, and lead you by his holy spirit through all those difficulties under which you at present labour.

The desire that you have to be better than you find yourself at present, is God's call begun

gun to be heard within you, and will make itſelf to be more heard within you, if you give but way to it, and reverence it as ſuch; humbly believing that he that calls will, and only can, help you to pay right and full obedience to it.

As to the advertiſement in the public papers, it deſerved no regard from you, or any one elſe. It muſt have come, either from a very ignorant and weak friend, or from a very inſignificant enemy to the writings of *J. B.* But be it as it will, it was not an object of your attention, nor could be of any uſe to you.

But to come to your own ſtate, you ſeem to yourſelf to be all *infatuation and ſtupidity*, becauſe your head and your heart are ſo contrary, the one delighting in heavenly notions, the other governed by earthly paſſions and purſuits. It is happy for you that you know and acknowledge this: for only through this truth, through the full and deep perception of it, can you have any entrance, or ſo much as the beginning of an entrance into the liberty of the children of God. God is in this reſpect dealing with you, as he does with thoſe whoſe darkneſs is to be changed into light. Which can never be done, till you fully know, 1. The real badneſs of your own heart, and 2. Your utter inability to deliver your-

yourſelf from it by any ſenſe, power, or activity of your own mind.

And was you in a better ſtate, as to your own thinking, the matter would be worſe with you. For the badneſs in your heart, though you had no ſenſibility of it, would ſtill be *there*, and would only be concealed to your much greater hurt. For there it certainly is, whether it be ſeen and found or not, and ſooner or later muſt ſhew itſelf in its full deformity, or the old man will never die the death which is due to him, and muſt be undergone, before the new man in Chriſt can be formed in us.

All that you complain of in your heart is common to man as man. There is no heart that is without it. And this is the one ground, why every man, as ſuch, however different in temper, complexion, or natural endowments from others, has one and the ſame full reaſon, and abſolute neceſſity, of being born again from above.

Fleſh and blood and the ſpirit of this world govern every ſpring in the heart of the natural man. And therefore you can never enough adore that ray of divine light, which breaking in upon your darkneſs has diſcovered this to be the ſtate of your heart, and raiſed only thoſe faint wiſhes that you feel to be delivered from it.

For

For faint as they are, they have their degree of goodneſs in them, and as certainly proceed *ſolely* from the goodneſs of God *working* in your ſoul, as the firſt dawning of the morning is ſolely from and wrought by the ſame ſun, which helps us to the noon-day light. Firmly therefore believe this as a certain truth, that the preſent ſenſibility of your incapacity for goodneſs is to be cheriſhed as a *heavenly ſeed* of life, as the bleſſed work of God in your ſoul.

Could you like any thing in your own heart, or ſo much as fancy any good to be in it, or believe that you had any power of your own to embrace and follow truth, this comfortable opinion, ſo far as it goes, would be your *turning away* from God and all goodneſs, and building iron walls of ſeparation betwixt God and your ſoul.

For converſion to God only then begins to be in *truth* and *reality*, when we ſee nothing that can give us the leaſt degree of faith, of hope, of truſt, or comfort in any thing, that we are of ourſelves.

To ſee vanity of vanities in all outward things, to loath and abhor certain ſins, are indeed *ſomething*, but yet as nothing, in compariſon of ſeeing and believing the vanity of vanities within us, and ourſelves as utterly unable to take one ſingle ſtep in true goodneſs as to add one cubit to our ſtature.

Under this conviction the gate of life is opened to us. And therefore it is, that all the preparatory parts of religion, all the various proceedings of God either over our *inward* or *outward* ſtate, ſetting up and pulling down, giving and taking away, light and darkneſs, comfort and diſtreſs, as independently of us, as he makes the rain to deſcend and the winds to blow, are all of them for this only end, to bring us to this conviction, that all that can be called *life*, *good*, and *happineſs* is to come ſolely from God, and not the ſmalleſt ſpark of it from ourſelves. When man was firſt created, all the good that he had in him was from God alone. [N. B.] This muſt be the ſtate of man for ever.—From the beginning of time through all eternity the creature can have no goodneſs, but that which God creates in it.

Our firſt created goodneſs is loſt, becauſe our firſt father departed from a full, abſolute dependence upon God. For a full, continual unwavering dependence upon God, is *that alone* which keeps God in the creature, and the creature in God.

Our loſt goodneſs can never come again, or be found in us, till by a power from Chriſt living in us we are brought out of ourſelves and all ſelfiſh truſts, into that full and bleſſed dependence upon God, in which our firſt father ſhould have lived.

What

What room now, my dear friend, for complaint at the ſight, ſenſe, and feeling of your inability to make yourſelf better than you are? Did you want *this ſenſe*, every part of your religion would only have the nature and vanity of idolatry. For you cannot come unto God, you cannot believe in him, you cannot worſhip him in ſpirit and truth, till he is regarded as the *only giver*, and you yourſelf as nothing elſe but the receiver of every heavenly good that can poſſibly come to life in you.

Can it trouble you, that it was God that made you and not you yourſelf? Yet this would be as unreaſonable, as to be troubled that you cannot make heavenly affections, or divine powers to ſpring up, and abide in your ſoul.

God muſt for ever be God alone; heaven and the heavenly nature are his, and muſt for ever and ever be received only from him, and for ever and ever only be preſerved by an entire dependence upon, and truſt in him. Now as all the religion of fallen man, fallen from God into himſelf and the ſpirit of this world, has no other end, but to bring us back to an *entire dependence* upon God, ſo we may juſtly ſay, bleſſed is that light, happy is that conviction, which brings us into a full and ſettled deſpair of ever having the leaſt good from ourſelves.

Then are we truly brought and laid at the gate of mercy: at which gate no ſoul ever did or can lie in vain.

A broken and contrite heart God will not deſpiſe. That is, God will not, God cannot paſs by, overlook, or diſregard it. But the heart is then only broken and contrite, when all its ſtrong-holds are broken down, all falſe coverings taken off, and it ſees, with inwardly opened eyes, every thing to be bad, falſe, and rotten, that does or can proceed from it as its own.

But you will perhaps ſay, That *your conviction* is only an uneaſy ſenſibility of your own ſtate, and has not the goodneſs of a broken and contrite heart in it.

Let it be ſo, yet it is rightly in order to it, and it can only begin as it begins at preſent in you. Your conviction is certainly not full and perfect; for if it was, you would not complain, or grieve at inability to help or mend yourſelf, but would patiently expect, and only look for help from God alone.

But whatever is wanting in your conviction, be it what it will, it cannot be added by yourſelf, nor come any other way, than as the higheſt degree of the divine life can come into it.

Know therefore you want of this, as of all other goodneſs. But know alſo at the ſame time, that it cannot be had through your

your own *willing* and *running*, but through God that ſheweth mercy; that is to ſay, through God who giveth us Jeſus Chriſt. For Jeſus Chriſt is the *one only mercy* of God to all the fallen world.

Now if all the mercy of God is only to be found in Chriſt Jeſus, if he alone can ſave us from our ſins, if he alone has power to heal all our infirmities, and reſtore original righteouſneſs, what room for any other pains, labour, or enquiry, but *where*, and *how* Chriſt is to be found.

It matters not what our evils are, deadneſs, blindneſs, infatuation, hardneſs of heart, covetouſneſs, wrath, pride, and ambition, *&c.* our remedy is always one and the ſame, always at hand, always certain and infallible. Seven devils are as eaſily caſt out by Chriſt as one. He came into the world, not to ſave from this, or that diſorder, but to deſtroy all the power and works of the devil in man.

If you aſk *where*, and *how* is Chriſt to be found? I anſwer in your heart, and by your heart, and no where elſe, nor by any thing elſe.

But you will perhaps ſay, It is your very heart that keeps you a ſtranger to Chriſt, and him to you, becauſe your heart is all bad, as unholy as a den of thieves.

I anſwer, That the finding this to be the ſtate of your heart is the real finding of Chriſt in it.

For nothing elſe but Chriſt can reveal and make manifeſt the ſin and evil in you. And he that *diſcovers* is the ſame Chriſt that takes away ſin. So that as ſoon as complaining guilt ſets itſelf before you, and will be ſeen, you may be aſſured that Chriſt is in you of a truth.

For Chriſt muſt firſt come as a diſcoverer and reprover of ſin. It is the infallible proof of his holy preſence within you.

Hear him, reverence him, ſubmit to him as a diſcoverer and reprover of ſin. Own his power and preſence in the feeling of your guilt, and then he that wounded will heal, he that found out the ſin will take it away, and he who ſhewed you your *den of thieves* will turn it into a holy temple of father, ſon, and holy ghoſt.

And now, Sir, you may ſee that your doubt and enquiry of me, whether your will was *really free or not*, was groundleſs.

You have no freedom, or power of will, to aſſume any holy temper, or take hold of ſuch degrees of goodneſs as you have a mind to have. For nothing is, or ever can be goodneſs in you, but the one *life*, *light*, and *ſpirit* of Chriſt, revealed, formed, and begotten in your ſoul. Chriſt in us is our only goodneſs, as Chriſt in us is our hope of glory. But Chriſt in us is the pure free gift of God to us.

But

But you have a true and full freedom of will and choice, either to *leave*, and *give up* your helpleſs ſelf to the operation of God on your ſoul, or to *rely* upon your own *rational* induſtry and *natural* ſtrength of mind. This is the truth of the freedom of your will, in your firſt ſetting out, which is a freedom that no man wants, or can want ſo long as he is in the body. And every unregenerate man has this freedom.

If therefore you have not that which you want to have of God, or are not that which you ought to be in Chriſt Jeſus, it is not becauſe you have no free power of leaving yourſelf in the hands, and under the operation of God, but becauſe the ſame freedom of your will ſeeks for help where it cannot be had, namely, in ſome ſtrength and activity of your own faculties.

Of this freedom of will it is ſaid, *According to thy faith, ſo be it done unto thee:* that is to ſay, according as thou leaveſt and truſteth thyſelf to God, ſo will his operation be in thee.

This is the real magic power of the firſt turning of the will; of which it is truly ſaid, that it *always hath* that which it willeth, and can have nothing elſe.

When this freedom of the will wholly *leaves* itſelf to God, ſaying, *Not mine, but thy will be done*, then it hath that which it

willeth. The will of God is done in it. It is in God, it hath divine power. It worketh with God, and by God, and comes at length to be *that faith* which can remove mountains; and nothing is too hard for it.

And thus it is that every unregenerate son of *Adam* hath life and death in his *own choice*, not by any natural power of taking which he will, but by a full freedom, either of *leaving* and trusting himself to the *redeeming operation* of God, which is eternal life, or of acting according to his *own will and power* in flesh and blood, which is eternal death.

And now, my dear friend, let me tell you, that as here lies all the true and real freedom, which cannot be taken from you, so in the constant exercise of this freedom, that is, in a continual *leaving* yourself to and *depending* upon the operation of God in your soul, lies all in your road to heaven. No divine virtue can be had any other way.

All the excellence and power of faith, hope, love, patience, and resignation, *&c.* which are the true and only graces of the spiritual life, have no other root or ground but this *free full leaving* of yourself to God, and are only so many different expressions of your willing nothing, seeking nothing, trusting to nothing, but the *life-giving power* of his holy presence in your soul.

To

To ſum up all in a word. Wait patiently, truſt humbly, depend only upon, ſeek ſolely to a God of light and love, of mercy and goodneſs, of glory and majeſty, ever dwelling in the inmoſt depth and ſpirit of your ſoul. There you have all the ſecret, hidden, inviſible upholder of all the creation, whoſe bleſſed operation will always be found by a humble, faithful, loving, calm, patient introverſion of your heart to him, who has his hidden heaven within you, and which will open itſelf to you, as ſoon as your heart is *left* wholly to his eternal ever-ſpeaking WORD, and ever-ſanctifying ſpirit within you.

Beware of all eagerneſs and activity of your own natural ſpirit and temper. Run not in any haſty ways of your own. Be patient under the ſenſe of your own vanity and weakneſs; and patiently wait for God to do his own work, and in his own way. For you can go no faſter than a full dependence upon God can carry you.

You will perhaps ſay, Am I then to be idle, and do nothing towards the ſalvation of my ſoul? No, you muſt by no means be idle, but earneſtly diligent, according to your meaſure, in all good works which the law and the goſpel direct you to, both with regard to yourſelf and other people.

Outward good works to other people may be juſtly conſidered as God's errand on which you

you are sent, and therefore to be done faithfully according to the will of God in obedience to him that sent you.

But nothing that you do or practise as a good to yourself and other people is in its proper state, grows from its right root, or reaches its true end, till you look for no willing, nor depend upon any *doing* that which is good, but by Christ the wisdom and power of God living in you. I caution you only against all eagerness and activity of your own spirit, so far as it leads you to seek, and trust to something that is not God and Christ within you.

I recommend to you stilness, calmness, patience, *&c.* not to make you lifeless, and indifferent about good works, or indeed with any regard to them, but solely with regard to your *faith*, that it may have its proper soil to grow in, and because all eagerness, restlessness, haste, and impatience, either with regard to God or ourselves, are not only great hindrances, but real defects of our faith and dependence upon God.

Lastly, be courageous then and full of hope, not by looking at any strength of your own, or fancying that you *now know* how to be wiser in *yourself* than you have hitherto been; no, this will only help you to find more and more defects of weakness in yourself; but be courageous in faith, and hope, and dependence

ence upon God. And be assured, that the one infallible way to all that is good is never to be weary in waiting, trusting, and depending upon God manifested in Christ Jesus.

I am your hearty Friend,
and Well-Wisher.

March 20, 1756.

LETTER XII.

To a person burdened with inward and outward Troubles.

Worthy and dear Sir,

MY heart embraces you with all the tenderness and affection of Christian love; and I earnestly beg of God to make me a messenger of *his peace* to your soul.

You seem to apprehend, I may be much surprised at the account you have given of yourself; but I am neither surprised nor offended at it; I neither condemn nor lament your estate, but shall endeavour to shew you how easy it may be made a blessing and happiness to you. In order to which, I shall not enter into a consideration of the different kinds of trouble you have set forth at large. I think it better to lay before you the one true ground

ground and root from whence all the evil and diſorders of human life have ſprung. This will make it eaſy for you to ſee, what that is which muſt, and only can, be the full remedy and relief for all of them, how different ſoever either in kind or degree.

The ſcripture has aſſured us, that God made man in *his own image and likeneſs*; a ſufficient proof, that man, in his firſt ſtate as he came forth from God, muſt have been abſolutely free from all vanity, want, or diſtreſs of any kind, from any thing either within or without him.—It would be quite abſurd and blaſphemous to ſuppoſe, that a creature beginning to exiſt in the image and likeneſs of God, ſhould have vanity of life, or vexation of ſpirit: a God-like perfection of nature, and a painful diſtreſſed nature, ſtand in the utmoſt contrariety to one another.

Again, the ſcripture has aſſured us, *that man that is born of a woman, hath but a ſhort time to live, and is full of miſery:* therefore man now is not that creature that he was by his creation. The firſt divine and God-like nature of *Adam*, which was to have been immortally holy in union with God, is loſt; and inſtead of it, a poor mortal of earthly fleſh and blood, born like a wild aſs's colt, of a ſhort life and full of miſery, is through a vain pilgrimage to end in duſt and aſhes. Therefore let every evil, whether inward or out-

outward, only teach you this truth, that man has infallibly loſt his firſt divine life in God; and that no poſſible comfort, or deliverance is to be expected, but only in this one thing, that though man had loſt his God, yet God is become man, that man may be again alive in God as at the firſt. For all the miſery and diſtreſs of human nature, whether of body or mind, is wholly owing to this *one cauſe*, that *God is not in man*, nor *man in God*, as the ſtate of his nature requires: it is becauſe man has loſt that *firſt life* of God in his ſoul in and for which he was created. He loſt this light, and ſpirit, and life of God, by turning his will, imagination. and deſire, into a taſting and ſenſibility of the good and evil of this earthly beaſtial world.

Now here are two things raiſed up in man, inſtead of the *life of God: Firſt*, *ſelf*, or *ſelfiſhneſs*, *brought* forth by his chuſing to have a wiſdom of *his own* contrary to the will and inſtruction of his Creator, *Secondly*, an earthly, beaſtial, mortal life and body, brought forth by his eating that food which was poiſon to his paradiſical nature. Both theſe muſt therefore be removed; that is, a man muſt firſt totally die to *ſelf*, and all earthly deſires, views, and intentions, before he can be again in God as his nature and firſt creation require.

But

But now if this be a certain and immutable truth, that man, so long as he is a *selfish earthly-minded* creature, must be deprived of his true life, the *life* of God, the *spirit of heaven* in his soul, then how is the face of things changed! For then, what life is so much to to be dreaded as a life of worldly ease and prosperity? What a misery, nay, what a curse is their in every thing that gratifies and nourishes our self-love, self-esteem, and self-seeking? On the other hand, what happiness is there in all inward and outward troubles and vexations, when they force us to feel and know the hell that is hidden within us, and the vanity of every thing without us, when they turn all our self-love into self-abhorrence, and force us to call upon God to save us from ourselves, to give us a new life, new light, and new spirit in *Christ Jesus*.

"O happy famine," might the poor prodigal have well said, "which, by reducing "me to the necessity of asking to eat husks "with swine, *brought me to myself*, and caus- "ed my return to my first happiness in my "father's house."

Now I will suppose your distressed state to be as you represent it; inwardly, darkness, heaviness, and confusion of thoughts and passions; outwardly, ill usage from friends, relations, and all the world; unable to strike up the

the leaſt ſpark of light or comfort by any thought or reaſoning of your own.

O happy famine, which leaves you not ſo much as the huſk of one human comfort to feed upon! For this is the time and place for all that *good* and *life* and *ſalvation* to happen to you, which happened to the prodigal ſon. Your way is as ſhort, and your ſucceſs as certain as his was: you have no more to do than he had; you need not call out for books, or methods of devotion; for in your preſent ſtate, much reading and borrowed prayers are not your beſt method: all that you are to offer to God, all that is to help you to find him to be your Saviour and Redeemer, is beſt taught and expreſſed by the diſtreſſed ſtate of your heart.

Only let your preſent and paſt diſtreſs make you feel and acknowledge this twofold great truth: *Firſt*, That in and of yourſelf you are nothing but darkneſs, vanity, and miſery; *Secondly*, that of yourſelf, you can no more help yourſelf to light and comfort, than you can create an angel. People at all times can ſeem to aſſent to theſe two truths; but then it is an aſſent that has no depth or reality, and ſo is of little or no uſe: but your condition has opened your heart for a deep and full conviction of theſe truths. Now give way, I beſeech you, to this conviction, and hold theſe two truths in the ſame degree of certainty as

you

you know two and two to be four, and then you are with the prodigal *come to yourself*, and above HALF YOUR WORK IS DONE.

Being now in the full poſſeſſion of theſe two truths, feeling them in the ſame degree of certainty as you feel your own exiſtence, you are, under this ſenſibility, to give up yourſelf abſolutely and entirely to God in Chriſt Jeſus, as into the hands of infinite *love*; firmly believing this *great* and infallible truth, that God has no will towards you but that of *infinite love*, and infinite deſire to make you a partaker of his divine nature; and that it is as *abſolutely impoſſible* for the father of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to refuſe all that *good* and *life* and *ſalvation* which you want, as it is for you to take it by your own power.

O drink deep of *this cup!* for the precious water of eternal life is in it. Turn unto God with *this faith*; caſt yourſelf into this *abyſs of love*; and then you will be in that ſtate the prodigal was in, when he ſaid, *I will ariſe and go to my father, and will ſay unto him, Father, I have ſinned againſt heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy ſon*; and all that will be fulfilled in you which is related of him.

Make this therefore the twofold exerciſe of your heart: *now*, bowing yourſelf down before God in the deepeſt ſenſe, and acknowledg-

ment of your own nothingneſs and vileneſs; *then*, looking up unto God in faith and love conſider him as always extending the arms of his mercy towards you, and full of an infinite deſire to *dwell in you*, as he dwells in angels in heaven. Content yourſelf with this inward and ſimple exerciſe of your heart for a while; and ſeek, or like nothing in any book, but that which nouriſhes and ſtrengthens this ſtate of your heart.

Come unto me, ſays the holy Jeſus, *all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will refreſh you.* Here is more for you to live upon, more light for your mind, more of unction for your heart, than in volumes of human inſtruction. Pick up the words of the holy Jeſus, and beg of him to be the *light* and *life* of your ſoul: love the ſound of his name; for Jeſus is the *love*, the *ſweetneſs*, the *compaſſionate goodneſs* of the *Deity* itſelf; which became man, that ſo men might have power to become the ſons of God. Love and pity and wiſh well to every ſoul in the world; *dwell in love*, and then you *dwell in God*, hate nothing but the evil that ſtirs in your own heart.

Teach your heart this prayer, till your heart continually ſaith, though not with outward words, "O holy Jeſus; meek Lamb "of God! bread that came down from hea- "ven! light and life of all holy ſouls! help "me to a true and living faith in thee. O do

" thou open thyſelf *within me* with all thy " holy nature, ſpirit, tempers, and inclina- " tions, that I may be born again of thee, " in thee a new creature, quickened and " revived, led and governed by thy holy " ſpirit."

Prayer ſo practiſed becomes the *life of the ſoul*, and the true *food of eternity*. Keep in this ſtate of application to God, and then you will infallibly find it to be the true way of riſing out of the vanity of time into the riches of eternity.

Do not expect or look for the ſame degrees of ſenſible fervour.—The matter lies not there.—Nature will have its ſhare; but the ups and downs of that are to be overlooked. Whilſt your will-ſpirit is good and ſet right, the changes of creaturely fervour leſſen not your union with God. It is the abyſs of the heart, an unfathomable depth of eternity within us, as much above ſenſible fervour as heaven is above earth; it is *this* that works our way to God, and unites with heaven. This abyſs of the heart is the divine nature and power within us, which never calls upon God in vain, but whether helped or deſerted by bodily fervour, penetrates through all outward nature, as eaſily and effectually as our thoughts can leave our bodies, and reach into the regions of eternity.

The

The poverty of our fallen nature, the depraved workings of flesh and blood, the corrupt tempers of our polluted birth in this world, do us no hurt, so long as the *spirit of prayer* works contrary to them, and longs for the first birth of the light and spirit of heaven. All our natural evil ceases to be our *own evil,* as soon as our will-spirit turns from it; it then changes its nature, loses all its poison and death, and only becomes our *holy cross,* on which we happily die from self and this world into the kingdom of heaven.

Would you have done with error, scruple, and delusion? Consider the *Deity* to be the greatest love, the greatest meekness, the greatest sweetness, the *eternal unchangeable will to be a good and blessing to every creature*; and that all the misery, darkness, and death of fallen angels and fallen men, consist in their having lost their *likeness to this divine nature.* Consider yourself, and all the fallen world, as having nothing to seek or wish for, but by the *spirit of prayer* to draw into the life of your soul rays and sparks of this divine, meek, loving, tender nature of God. Consider the holy Jesus as the *gift of* God to your soul, to begin and finish the birth of God and heaven within you in spight of every inward or outward enemy. These three infallible truths heartily embraced, and made the nourishment of your soul, shorten and

ſecure the way to heaven, and leave no room for error, ſcruple, or deluſion.

Expect no life, light, ſtrength or comfort, but from the ſpirit of God dwelling and manifeſting his own goodneſs in your ſoul. The beſt of men and the beſt of books, can only do you good, ſo far as they turn you from themſelves, and every human thing to ſeek, and have, and receive every kind of good from God alone; not a diſtant, or an abſent God, but a God living, moving, and always working in the ſpirit and heart of your ſoul.

They never find God who ſeek for him by reaſoning and ſpeculation; for ſince God is the higheſt ſpirit, and the higheſt life, nothing but a like ſpirit, and a like life, can unite with him, find or feel, or know any thing of him. Hence it is, that faith, and hope, and love, turned towards God, are the only poſſible, and alſo infallible means of obtaining a true and living knowledge of him. And the reaſon is plain, it is becauſe by theſe *holy tempers*, which are the workings of *ſpirit* and *life* within us, we ſeek the God of life *where he is*, we call upon him by his *own voice*, we draw near to him by *his own ſpirit*; for nothing can breathe forth faith, and love, and hope to God, but that ſpirit and life which is of God, and which therefore through fleſh

and

and blood thus preſſes towards him, and readily unites with him.

There is not a more infallible truth in the world than this, *that neither reaſoning nor learning can ever introduce a ſpark of heaven into our ſouls:* but if this be ſo, then you have nothing to ſeek, nor any thing to fear, from reaſon. *Life* and *death* are the things in queſtion: they are neither of them the growth of reaſoning or learning, but each of them is a ſtate of the ſoul, and only thus differ, *death is the want and life the enjoyment of it's higheſt good.* Reaſon therefore and learning have no power here; but only by their vain activity to keep the ſoul inſenſible of that life and death, one of which is always growing up in it, according as the will and deſire of the heart worketh. Add reaſon to a vegetable, and you add nothing to its life or death. Its life and fruitfulneſs lieth in the ſoundneſs of its root, the goodneſs of the ſoil, and the riches it derives from air and light. Heaven and hell grow thus in the ſoul of every man; his heart is his root; if that is turned from all evil, it is then like the plant in a good ſoil; when it hungers and thirſts after the divine life, it then infallibly draws the light and ſpirit of God into it, which are infinitely more ready and willing to live and fructify in the ſoul, than light and air to enter into the plant that hungers after

them. For the soul hath its breath, and being, and life, for no other end, but that the TRIUNE God may manifest the riches and powers of his own life in it.

Thus *hunger* is all, and in all worlds, every thing lives in it, and by it; nothing else eats, or partakes of life; and every thing eats according to its own hunger. Every thing hungers after its own mother, that is, every thing has a natural magnetick tendency to partake of that from which it had its being, and can only find its rest in that from whence it came.—Dead as well as living things bear witness to this truth: the stones fall to the earth, the sparks fly upwards for this only reason, because every thing must tend towards that from whence it came.

Were not angels and the souls of men breathed forth from God, as so many real offsprings of the divine nature, it would be as impossible for them to have any desire of God, as for stones to go upwards, and the flame downwards. Thus you may see and feel, that the *spirit of prayer* not only proves that you came from God, but is your certain way of returning to him.

When therefore it is the one ruling, never-ceasing desire of our hearts, that God may be the *beginning* and *end*, the *reason* and *motive*, the *rule* and *measure*, of our doing or not doing, from morning to night, then every where, whether speaking or silent, whether in-

inwardly or outwardly employed, we are equally offered up to the eternal ſpirit, have our life in him and from him, and are united to him by that *ſpirit of prayer*, which is the comfort, the ſupport, the ſtrength and ſecurity of the ſoul, travelling by the help of God through the vanity of time into the riches of eternity. For this *ſpirit of prayer* let us willingly give up all that we inherit from our fallen father, to be all *hunger* and *thirſt* after God, and to have no thought or care, but how to be wholly his devoted inſtruments; every where, and in every thing, his adoring, joyful, and thankful ſervants. Have your eyes ſhut, and ears ſtopped to every thing, that is not a ſtep in that ladder that reaches from earth to heaven.

Reading is good, hearing is good, converſation and meditation are good; but then they are only good at times and occaſions, in a certain degree, and muſt be uſed and governed with ſuch caution, as we eat and drink, and refreſh ourſelves, or they will bring forth in us the fruits of intemperance. But the *ſpirit of prayer* is for all times, and all occaſions: it is a lamp that is to be always burning, a light to be ever ſhining; every thing calls for it, every thing is to be done in it, and governed by it; becauſe it is, and means, and wills nothing elſe, but the whole totality of the ſoul, not doing this or

that, but wholly inceſſantly given up to God to be *where*, and *what*, and *how* he pleaſes.

This ſtate of *abſolute reſignation*, *naked faith*, and *pure love of God*, is the higheſt perfection, and moſt purified life of thoſe who are born again from above, and through the divine power become ſons of God: and it is neither more nor leſs, than what our bleſſed Redeemer has called, and qualified us to long and aſpire after in theſe words: *Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven.* It is to be ſought for in the ſimplicity of a little child, without being captivated with any myſterious depths or heights of ſpeculation; without coveting any knowledge, or wanting to ſee any ground of nature, grace or creature, but ſo far as it brings us nearer to God, forces us to forget and renounce every thing for him; to do every thing in him, with him, and for him: and to give every breathing, moving, ſtirring intention, and deſire of our heart, ſoul, ſpirit, and life to him.

Let every creature have your *love*. *Love* with its fruits of *meekneſs*, *patience*, and *humility*, is all that we can wiſh for to ourſelves, and our fellow creatures; for this is to live in God, united to him both for time and eternity.

To deſire to communicate good to every creature, in the degree we can, and it is capable of receiving from us, is a divine temper; for thus God ſtands unchangeably diſpoſed

poſed towards the whole creation: but let me add my requeſt, as you value the peace which God has brought forth by his holy ſpirit in you, as you deſire to be continually taught by an unction from above, that you would on no account enter into any diſpute with any one about the truths of ſalvation; but give them every help but that of debating with them; for no man has fitneſs for the light of the goſpel till he finds an hunger and thirſt, and want of ſomething better than that which he has and is by nature. Yet we ought not to check our inclinations to help others in every way we can. Only do what you do as a work of God; and then, whatever may be the event, you will have reaſon to be content with the ſucceſs that God gives it. *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear*; may be enough for you, as well as it was for our bleſſed Lord.

The next thing that belongs to us, and which is alſo godlike, is a true unfeigned patience and meekneſs, ſhewing every kind of good-will and tender affection towards thoſe that turn a deaf ear to us; looking upon it to be full as contrary to God's method, and the good ſtate of our own heart, to diſpute with any one in contentious words, as to fight with him for the truths of ſalvation.

Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt, ſaith our bleſ-

bleſſed Lord. He called none elſe, becauſe no one elſe hath ears to hear, or a heart to receive the truths of redemption.

Every man is a vain diſputer, till ſuch time as ſomething has diſturbed his ſtate, and awakened in him a ſenſibility of his own evil and miſerable nature. We are all of us afraid both of inward and outward diſtreſs; and yet, till diſtreſs comes our life is but a dream, and we have no awakened ſenſibility of our own true ſtate.

We are apt to conſider parts and abilities as the proper qualifications for the reception of divine truths; and wonder that a man of a fine underſtanding ſhould not immediately embrace juſt and ſolid doctrines: but the matter is quite otherwiſe. Had man kept poſſeſſion of his firſt rich and glorious ſtate, there had been no foundation for the goſpel-redemption; and the doctrine of the croſs muſt have appeared quite unreaſonable to be preſſed upon him: and therefore ſays our Lord, *To the poor the goſpel is preached.* It is ſolely to them, and none elſe: that is, to poor fallen man, that has loſt all the true natural riches and greatneſs of his firſt divine life; to him is the goſpel preached. But if a man knows and feels nothing of this poverty of his nature, he is not that perſon to whom the goſpel belongs: it has no more ſuitableneſs to his ſtate, than it had to man

un-

unfallen: and then the greater his parts and abilities are, the better is he qualified to shew the folly of every doctrine of that salvation, of which he has no want.

Such a man, though he may be of an humane, ingenuous, generous, and frank nature, of lively parts and much candour, is nevertheless entirely ignorant of the depth of the heart of man, and the necessities of human nature. As yet (though he knows it not) he is only at play and pastime, pleasing himself with supposed deep enquiries after strict truth, whilst he is only sporting himself with lively wandering images of this and that, just as they happen to start up in his mind. Could but he see himself in the state of the poor distressed prodigal son, and find that himself is the very person there recorded, he would then, but not till then, see the fitness of that redemption, which is offered him by the mercy of God in CHRIST JESUS. But such an one, alas! is rich; he is sound; light is in his own power, goodness is in his own possession: he feels no distress or darkness; but as a *crucible* of *reason* and *judgment*, that on every occasion separates gold from dross: and therefore he must be left to himself, to his own *elysium*, till something more than argument and disputation awakens him out of these golden dreams.

Let

Let us beware alſo of the religious Phariſee, who raves againſt *ſpiritual religion, becauſe it touches the very heart-ſtring of all ſyſtematical divinity, and ſhakes the very foundation of every* BABEL in every country; for not a ſyſtem of divinity, ſince ſyſtems were in being, whether popiſh or proteſtant, deſerves a better name.

All preachers of the true ſpiritual myſtery of the goſpel, of a birth, light, and life from above, in and by JESUS CHRIST (which are the myſtic writers of every age) ever were, and will be treated by the reigning faſhionable orthodoxy, as enemies to the outward goſpel and its ſervices, juſt as the prophets of God (who were the myſtic preachers of the *Jewiſh* diſpenſation) were by the then reigning orthodoxy condemned and deſpiſed, for calling people to a ſpiritual meaning of the dead letter, to a holineſs infinitely greater than that of their outward ſacrifices, types, and ceremonies.

Whoever he is that has any ſituation of his own to defend, be it that of a celebrated preacher, a champion for received orthodoxy, a head, a leader, or follower of any ſect or party, or particular method; or that ſeems, both in his own eyes, and in the eyes of others, to have made himſelf ſignificant in any kind of religious diſtinction; every ſuch perſon, ſooner or later, will find that he has much

much of that very fame to give up, which hindered the zealous and eminently religious Phariſee from converting to CHRIST in the ſpirit of a little child.

Nor doth it help the matter, that ſuch an one abounds with piety and excellence; for St. *Paul* was governed by a ſpirit of great piety, great excellence, and zeal for God. He ſays of himſelf, that when he was perſecuting the diſciples of Chriſt, he *lived in all good conſcience, as touching the law blameleſs, and according to the ſtraiteſt ſect of the Jewiſh religion:* for the Phariſees, though many of them had all that hypocriſy and rottenneſs which Chriſt laid to their charge, yet as a ſect, they were an order of moſt confeſſed and reſplendent ſanctity; and yet the more earneſt and upright they were in this kind of zeal for goodneſs, the more earneſtly they oppoſed and condemned the heavenly myſtery of a *new life* from CHRIST, as appears from St. *Paul.*

This ſect of the Phariſees did not ceaſe with the *Jewiſh* church; it only loſt its old name; it is ſtill in being, and ſprings now in the ſame manner from the goſpel, as it did then from the law: it has the ſame place, lives the ſame life, does the ſame work, minds the ſame things, has the ſame goodneſs at heart, has the ſame religious honour and claim to piety in the Chriſtian, as it had in the *Jewiſh* church; and as much

much miſtakes the depths of the myſtery of the goſpel, as that ſect miſtook the myſtery ſignified by the letter of the law and the prophets.

It would be eaſy to ſhew in ſeveral inſtances, how the leaven of that ſect works amongſt us, juſt as it did amongſt them. *Have any of the rulers believed on him?* was the orthodox queſtion of the antient Phariſees. Now we Chriſtians readily and willingly condemn the weakneſs and folly of that queſtion: and yet who does not ſee, that for the moſt part both prieſt and people, in every Chriſtian country, live and govern themſelves by the folly and weakneſs of the very ſame ſpirit which put that queſtion? For when God, as he has always done from the beginning of the world, raiſes up private and illiterate perſons full of light and wiſdom from above, ſo as to be able to diſcover all the workings of the myſtery of iniquity, and to open the ground and truth, and abſolute neceſſity of ſuch an inward ſpirit and life of CHRIST revealed in us, as time, carnal wiſdom, and worldly policy have departed from; when all this is done by the weakeſt inſtruments of God, in ſuch a ſimplicity and fulneſs of demonſtration, as may be juſtly deemed a miracle, do not clergy and laity get rid of it all, though ever ſo unanſwerable, merely by the ſtrength of the Phariſees good old queſtion,

ſay-

saying with them, " *Have any of the rulers* " *believed* and taught these things? Hath the " church in council or convocation? Hath " *Calvin, Luther, Zuinglius,* or any of our " renowned system-makers, ever taught or " asserted these matters?"

But hear what our blessed Lord saith of the place, the power, and origin of truth: He refers us not to the current doctrines of the times, or to the systems of men, but to his own name, his own nature, his own divinity hidden in us: *My sheep,* says he, *hear my voice.* Here the whole matter is decisively determined, both where truth is, and who they are that can have any knowledge of it.

HEAVENLY truth is no where spoken but by the voice of CHRIST, nor heard but by a power of CHRIST living in the hearer. As he is the eternal only word of God, that speaks forth all the wisdom and wonders of God; so he alone is the word, that speaks forth all the life, wisdom, and goodness, that is or can be in any creature; it can have none but what it has in him and from him: this is the one unchangeable boundary of truth, goodness, and every perfection of men on earth, or angels in heaven.

Literary learning, from the beginning to the end of time, will have no more of heavenly wisdom, nor any less of worldly foolish-

ifhneſs in it, at one time than at another; its nature is one and the ſame through all ages; what it was in the *Jew* and the heathen, that ſame it is in the Chriſtian. Its name as well as nature is unalterable, viz. *fooliſhneſs with* God.

I ſhall add no more, but the two or three following words.

I. Receive every inward and outward trouble, every diſappointment, pain, uneaſineſs, temptation, darkneſs, and deſolation, with both thy hands, as a true opportunity and bleſſed occaſion of *dying to ſelf*, and entering into a fuller fellowſhip with thy ſelf-denying ſuffering Saviour.

II. Look at no inward or outward trouble in any *other view*; reject every other thought about it; and then every kind of trial and diſtreſs will become the bleſſed day of thy proſperity.

III. Be afraid of ſeeking or finding comfort in any thing but God alone: for that which gives the comfort takes ſo much of thy heart from God. "Quid eſt cor purum? cui ex toto & pure ſufficit ſolus "Deus, cui nihil ſapit, quod nihil delectat, "niſi Deus." *That is*, What conſtitutes a pure heart? One to which God alone is totally and purely ſufficient; to which nothing reliſhes, or gives delight, but God alone.

IV. That ſtate is beſt, which exerciſeth the

the higheſt faith in, and fulleſt reſignation to God.

V. What is it you want and ſeek, but that God *may be all in all in you?* But how can this be, unleſs all creaturely good and evil become as nothing in you or to you?

" On anima mea, abſtrahe te ab omni-
" bus, Quid tibi cum mutabilibus creatu-
" ris? Solum ſponſum tuum, qui omnium
" eſt author creaturarum, expectans, hoc age,
" ut cor tuum ille liberum & expeditum
" ſemper inveniat, quoties illi ad ipſum ve-
" nire placuerit." *That is,* O my ſoul! abſtract thyſelf from every thing. What haſt thou to do with changeable creatures? Waiting and expecting thy bridegroom, who is the author of all creatures, let it be thy ſole concern, that he may find thy heart free and diſengaged, as often as it ſhall pleaſe him to viſit thee.

Be aſſured of this, that ſooner or later we muſt be brought to this conviction, that every thing in ourſelves by nature is evil, and muſt be entirely given up; and that nothing that is creaturely can make us better than we are by nature. Happy therefore and bleſſed are all thoſe inward or outward troubles, that haſten this conviction in us; that with the whole ſtrength of our ſouls, we may be driven to ſeek ALL from and in God, without the leaſt thought, hope, or contrivance

after any other relief: then it is, that we are made truly partakers of the croſs of CHRIST, and from the bottom of our hearts ſhall be enabled to ſay with St. *Paul, God forbid that I ſhould glory in any thing, ſave the croſs of our Lord* JESUS CHRIST; *by which I am crucified to the world, and the world is crucified to me.*

Give up yourſelf to God without reſerve. This implies ſuch a ſtate or habit of heart, as does nothing of itſelf, from its own reaſon, will, or choice, but ſtands always in faith, hope, and abſolute dependence upon being led by the ſpirit of God into every thing that is according to his will; ſeeking nothing by deſigning, reaſoning, and reflection, how you ſhall beſt promote the honour of God, but in ſingleneſs of heart meeting every thing that every day brings forth, as ſomething that comes from GOD, and is to be received, and gone through by you, in ſuch an heavenly uſe of it, as you would ſuppoſe the HOLY JESUS would have done in ſuch occurrences. This is an attainable degree of perfection; and by having CHRIST and his ſpirit always in your eye, and nothing elſe, you will never be left to yourſelf, nor without the full guidance of GOD.

LET-

LETTER XIII.

To Mr. *T. L.*

My dearly beloved Friend,

I BEGIN, as I did my laſt, with aſſuring you, that I love to hear from you.

I am in ſome concern about the *activity* of your religious ſpirit, which I have often cautioned you againſt.—You have ſeen, and as I think deeply apprehended, the true ground on which man's redemption ſtands. This ground has been ſhewn you, not only from the plain letter of ſcripture, but confirmed by the whole frame of nature.

Every thing in heaven and earth, every thing that you inwardly or outwardly feel, or know of your own ſoul and body, are all ſhewn to bear infallible witneſs to theſe two fundamental truths of the goſpel: that our firſt father died to his firſt life in God; and that nothing in the whole nature of things can be our redemption, but the firſt life of God, born again of God in the ſoul. You have had the fulleſt proof that man was created in this high perfection of life. You have had the fulleſt proof that *Adam* had no

other way of dying to heaven, or losing his first state in God, but by the working of his will; and that every son of *Adam* is to this day only that which his *faith*, or the *working* of his *will*, or the desire of his heart (for they are all the same thing) maketh him to be. *Jesus Christ* is the divine nature, which must be alive again in man. But the life of the Deity can only arise by a birth in us, by the hunger and faith and desire of the heart, or the working of the will turned to it; and this is the faith in Christ that does all.

To what purpose therefore is so much anxious enquiry about this or that? Why this running after every one, to hear the history of himself, and the secrets of his own fancied experience?

If you know a man to be a *fatalist*, do you not enough know that he cannot explain the mysteries of the gospel, all which have a quite contrary ground.

If a man has no notion or belief of the fall of man, can he tell you either the nature, or the necessity of christian redemption? What room could there be for the divine phylanthropy, if it could be supposed, that man and the world had not a better state and life from him at first, than they have now?

If a man denies the necessity of the new birth from above, will you believe that this proceeds from an intimate familiarity with Christ, teaching him in private the disbelief

of

of that which he taught publicly when on earth? What folly to tell you, that you are only in a *legal ſtate*, unleſs he could prove to you that you have no averſion to wickedneſs, nor abſtain from any ſin but ſo far as the fear and dread of puniſhment keep you from it. For this is the truth of the legal ſtate; but when ſin is diſliked, and the commandments kept through a *love of God*, and a deſire of divine goodneſs, there is the man in Chriſt a new creature, no longer under the yoke of the law, but living in the freedom and ſpirit of God.

If a man tells you that Jeſus in not God, ſurely it is time to have no fellowſhip with him. If he tells you, you are not to pray to God but to Jeſus, who is only a creature, is not this telling you, that it is unlawful for us to pray, as Jeſus taught his diſciples? And if it was wrong to pray to God, the Old and the New Teſtament are, from the beginning to the end, full of falſe religion? Or will he ſay, that though under the Old Teſtament men might rightly pray to the Deity, yet we by being Chriſtians, have loſt this privilege of relation to, and dependence upon God? But ſurely, I need not expoſe the extravagancy of theſe things, nor exhort you to be weary of ſuch entertainment.

You tell me that you cannot help thinking with Mr. *S. That all partial ſyſtems of ſalvation, are greatly derogatory to the goodneſs of God:*

but that you would say this to very few, but myself. But, dear soul, why should you say this to me? I have without any scruple, openly declared to all the world, that from eternity to eternity, nothing can come from God but mere infinite love.—In how many ways have I proved and asserted, that there neither is, nor can be any wrath, or *partiality* in God, but that every creature must have all that happiness, which the infinite love and power of God can help it to. Can I, or any creature, possibly say more of an *impartiality* in God? And is it not quite unreasonable to ask more about it, or to carry it farther? You say, *The seeming impossibility of the spirit and light of God arising up again in any creature that has extinguished it* is, you *presume, the strongest argument that can be offered in support of everlasting misery*. And therefore you say, you *have chosen, with submission, to examine the force of this principal argument, which runs through the* APPEAL, *and my other writings*. But, my dear friend, how came you to say this? For this is so far from being the principal, or any argument that runs through my *Appeal*, and other books, that there is not one single word in all the *Appeal*, nor any other of my books, that touches upon this matter, till you come to the last book, *viz. The Way to Divine Knowledge*; and even in that book, the impossibility is so far from being *asserted*, that it

it is there affirmed, that this impoſſibility is not proved, nor ever likely to be ſo. Will you therefore charge me with proving a thing that I ſhew cannot be proved? It is my capital doctrine, that God is all love, and merely a *will to all goodneſs*; that he muſt eternally will that to the creature which he willed at its creation.

But, my dear ſoul, debate not ſuch matters as theſe, either with me, or any one elſe. Stop your ears to all that you hear about them, and turn from every one that will lead you into them. The perplexity that you make to yourſelf in ſuch matters is death to the divine life within you, is a great abuſe of God's goodneſs towards you, and is a likely way for you to loſe the peace and joy of that divine light, which has ſo largely opened itſelf within you.

Mr. *G.* and Mr. *S.* both of them (as they ſay) come out of the depths of hell, full of a new riſen divine light within them. The firſt makes me a greater blaſphemer of God than the devils are, [N. B.] becauſe I ſay, God has no other nature or will towards every creature, but love and goodneſs.

The other calls me blind and ignorant, becauſe I have not a ſelf-evident knowledge of the ſalvation of devils. Now was you to find out a third, laying claim to the ſame certainty of divine light as theſe two do, you might perhaps have them both condemned by one

who had a *self-evident knowledge* of absolute election and reprobation, and who knew with as great certainty that God damns some eternally to make his power to be known, as Mr. *S.* knows Christ to be only a creature, and that prayer is not to be made to God, but solely to this creature.

Dear *L.* Son of my love, I do not know that ever I wasted my spirits in writing, or thinking in the manner of this letter before, and trust I never shall again. But love towards you, and a hearty zeal for your true growth in the spiritual life, have compelled me into this wrangle.

Put away all needless curiosity in divine matters, and look upon every thing to be so, but that which helps you to die to *yourself*, that the spirit and life of Christ may be formed and revealed in you.

As for the purification of *all human nature*, either in this world or some after ages, I fully believe it. And as to that of angels, if it is possible, I am glad of it, and also sure enough, that it will then come to pass.

Dear Soul,

Adieu.

LET-

LETTER XIV.

To the Same.

My dear Friend,

I THANK you for the favour of your's. In the two extracts you have ſent, the writer ſays twice, *He cannot adopt the darkſide of my ſyſtem.* If what I have wrote may be called a ſyſtem, it has put a full end to all that was *dark* and *partial* in every other ſyſtem. It makes all the univerſe both of nature and grace to be an edifice of love, kept up and governed by love, for I allow of no other God but love, who from eternity to eternity can have no other will towards the creature but to communicate good; and that no creature can have any miſery from which infinite goodneſs can deliver it. Where then is the dark ſide? Muſt I aſſert God to be more than infinitely good?

Dear Soul.

June 9, 1752.

Adieu.

LET-

LETTER XV.

To the same.

My dear L.

I CANNOT tell you how much I love you. But that which of all things I have most at heart with regard to you, is the real progress of your soul in the divine life. Heaven seems to be awakened in you. It is a tender plant. It requires stillness, meekness, and the unity of the heart, totally given up to the unknown workings of the spirit of God, which will do all its work in the calm soul, that has no hunger or desire but to escape out of the mire of its earthly life into its lost union and life in God.

I mention this, out of a fear of your giving into an eagerness into many things, which though seemingly innocent, yet divide and weaken the workings of the divine life within you. For a *multiplicity of wills* is the one only evil, disease, and misery, both of our souls and bodies. That which can make the soul to have only *one will*, and *one love*, is the *universal* tincture both for soul and body. And nothing else is it. That alone, can take the fall, or curse, out of the body which

which can take it out of the ſoul. For the curſe through all nature and creature, is but *one* and the *ſame* thing, viz. *The abſence of the heavenly power*. Heaven is dead in gold, juſt as it is dead in man; and its heavenly tincture can only be made alive in the ſame manner and from the ſame power, as the inward man is born again of the water and ſpirit from above.

Our outward man muſt be tormented, crucified, mortified in the *fire* of our own fleſh and blood; and then it is as the groſs gold in the crucible heated by earthly fire. But as no fiery torments of our own fleſh and blood can glorify our inward man, and ſet him in his firſt angelic ſtate, ſo no outward fire can torment gold into its firſt heavenly ſtate. Our Lord ſaid to the crucified thief, To day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.

Now no one is a divine magus, till he is thus qualified to ſay to his *ſubject*, To day ſhalt thou be *with me* in Paradiſe. If he himſelf is not in Paradiſe, he can do no paradiſical work. But, my friend, let not what I here ſay put you upon diſputing this point with any one, for I ſay it for a quite contrary end, to ſhew you the vanity of all ſuch diſcourſe.

My dear Soul,

Oct. 16, 1752.

Adieu.

LET-

LETTER XVI.

To the ſame.

My dear L.

I HEARTILY thank you for your laſt. Talk no more of obtruding upon me with your letters. Every thing that comes from you is welcome. I have no need to write any thing to you, for you know all that I have to ſay. You ſtand upon the ſame ground that I do. And you have nothing to do but to be ſteadfaſt and unmoveable in that light, which God has vouchſafed to you.

But, my friend, take notice of this, no truths, however ſolid and well grounded, help you to any divine life, but ſo far as they are *taught, nouriſhed, and ſtrengthened* by an unction from above; and that nothing more *dries* and *extinguiſhes* this heavenly unction, than a *talkative, reaſoning* temper, that is always catching at every opportunity of hearing, or telling ſome religious matters.

You have found enough to prove to you, that all muſt be found in God manifeſted in the life of your ſoul. And I muſt ſay again,

Shut

Shut your eyes, and ſtop your ears, to all religious tales.

My dear Soul.

Feb. 12, 1753.

Adieu.

LETTER XVII.

To the ſame.

My dear L.

YOU have communicated to me ſeveral letters that you have wrote to your friends, and I much approve of the ſpirit in which you have wrote them. Only I muſt repeat, what I have often ſaid, Have a care of too much eagerneſs to ſet other people right, leſt it lead you too far from home, or too much exhauſt that breath, which is to keep up the ſtrength of your own inward life. I believe you underſtand me.

You want a remedy to prevent the growth of *ſuicide* and *madneſs*. They are not to be remedied by any *new way* of ſetting forth the folly and extravagance of them. When the fruit is evil, there is no remedy but in putting the root of the tree in a better ſtate.

Pride is the parent of *ſuicide* and *madneſs*. Would you have a ſhare in removing theſe evils,

evils, you must not cast about for high speculations; there is but *one step* to be taken, and that is, to shew the necessity of dying to *pride*, and seeking for salvation only in *humility*. JESUS CHRIST is the only peace, and rest, and satisfaction of human life. This is absolute, and admits of no exception. St. *John the Baptist* was the true preparer of the way to CHRIST; if you think of any other way, it is labour lost. This point is absolutely determined where CHRIST saith, *They have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them. If they believe not Moses nor the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one arose from the dead.*

Miracles and demonstrations, you see, are in vain, till *Moses* and the prophets are believed.

Now *Moses* is *sin*, made known by the law, and the prophets are *faith* and *hope* in God. And these two things must have their state and work in the soul, before it can have any benefit from CHRIST and his miracles. If you would therefore give some check to the growth of suicide and madness, it cannot be by attacking them in themselves, or speaking to the unreasonableness of their *particular* nature, this is as useless as a miracle to him that heareth neither *Moses* nor the prophets.

Now as *Moses* and the prophets were of neces-

neceſſity before the coming of CHRIST, ſo it muſt be in every human ſoul.

And this proves the truth of what has been ſo often aſſerted, of the importance of apprehending the fall of man, in its true and full depth. For to hear *Moſes* and the prophets is in reality only this, *viz.* Man become truly ſenſible of his *impure and fallen* nature, and *looking up to God* to be delivered from it. Then, whether he has or has not ever ſeen the Bible, he is a true believer of *Moſes* and the prophets, is that loſt ſheep that is ſure of being found, that weary and heavy laden that muſt find reſt and refreſhment in CHRIST.

It matters not therefore, my friend, what you are upon, whether you would ſave a man from *deiſm*, *debauchery*, or *ſuicide*, you muſt begin in the ſame place, from one and the ſame ground, and this as unavoidably, as every fruit muſt have its beginning from the root, and from the root in its right ſtate.

The amiableneſs of any virtue, or the horrid nature of any vice, whilſt only conſidered as in themſelves, are but as pictures ſet before our eyes, and have no other effect upon us. And this is the unprofitableneſs of all *moral inſtructions*, whether heathen or chriſtian.

If

If you can help a man to seek and find, and know himself, and his real relation to God; to know that he has neither inward nor outward evil, but because he has lost his *true state* and place in God; and that therefore nothing can be his peace and happiness but his first divine life or nature quickened again in him, then you have done all that you can for him, whatever his malady is.—But enough of this.

Dear soul,

Aug. 4, 1753.

Adieu.

LETTER XVIII.

To the same.

My dear L.

YOU have a scruple about the wonderous lives of the fathers in the *deserts*, because in such contrariety to his character who went about doing good. But if you only consider what you have said of them yourself, that the reading of their lives at *once struck you with the deepest devotion, and made you think what a noviciate you was in the love of God*, you would have reason enough to place

place them amongſt the faithful and true diſciples of him, who went about doing good. For what greater good, than to do that to others, for ſo many ages, which they have done for you? They are not written to raiſe an emulation in you to copy after them; nor is there any reaſon to think that their ſtory is not much exaggerated. But be that as it will, it is certain they were the ſalt of the world for that time, and that the good providence of God bleſſed his church with them.

They are not for you to read, but as it were *en paſſant*, or for a little change of air, and their particularity of life no more concerns you, than that of *John the Baptiſt*.

God's laſt diſpenſation to the world is the opening the ground and myſtery of all things, to which every blindneſs, and vanity, and ſtrife of human life muſt, ſooner or later, be forced to give up itſelf.

The children of this diſpenſation have no occaſion to look backwards. It is like learning your *A B C* when you are called and qualified to read.

Be not too fond of abſtemiouſneſs, nor too much attached to a milk diet; let nothing be a reaſon for your doing, or not doing any thing of this kind, but the health and ſtrength of your body. As ſoon as you are able to bear a ſtronger diet, I would have you by all

means to uſe it. There is no more harm in getting ſtrength from good food, than from ſound ſleep. And this kind of diet is only to be uſed as a remedy for a time.

Dear Soul,

Feb. 9, 1754.

Adieu.

LETTER XIX.

To the ſame.

My dear Friend,

THE variety of trials you have lately met with are but a ſpecimen of what you are to expect, in ſome form or other, ſo long as you breathe the air of this fallen world.——The longer we are without them, the more our need of them is increaſed. And they never give great ſmart, but where ſomething is to be torn off that ſticks too cloſe to us.—One reflection upon theſe ſacred words, "My kingdom is not of this world; "—The ſon of man hath not where to lay "his head;" are ſufficient to take not only the ſting out of every croſs, that can here befal us, but even to make us afraid and aſhamed

aſhamed of being pleaſed with any thing, that has the name of worldly honour and proſperity.

You have no reaſon to wonder at any thing you ſee, or hear, of the partiality, ſelfiſhneſs, envy, and enmity, that ſo often break out between brothers and ſiſters of the ſame blood.—For if *blood-relations*, conſidered as ſuch, could have any true goodneſs, or unſelfiſh regard to one another, we ſhould not be under the neceſſity of being born again from above.

Will it do you any good to tell you, that thus ſays my heart, without ſpeaking a word, "*Let nothing live in me but the redeeming power of thy holy Jeſus, nothing pray in me but thy holy ſpirit?*——This is my ſhip in which I would be always at ſea.—All that I ſeek, or mean, either for myſelf, or others, by every height and depth of divine knowledge given us by God in his illuminated *Behmen*, is only for this end, that we may be more willing and glad to become ſuch little children, as our Lord has told us are the only heirs of the kingdom of God.

The piercing critic may, and naturally will grow in pride, as faſt as his ſkill in words diſcovers itſelf.—And every kind of knowledge, that ſhews the ſcholar, the orator, the diſputer, the commentator, the hiſtorian, his

own powers and *abilities*, are the *ſame* temptation to him that *Eve* had from the ſerpent; and he will get no more good by the love and reliſh of ſuch knowledge, than ſhe got by her love of the tree that was ſo deſirable to make one wiſe.

But he whoſe eyes are opened to ſee into this *myſtery of all things*, ſees nothing but *death to himſelf*, and to every thing that he had called, or delighted in as his own. This is the *bold depth* of his knowledge. And if you would know its *aſpiring height*, it conſiſts in learning to know, that which the angels and twenty-four elders about the throne of God knew, when they caſt down their crowns before him that ſat on the throne, ſaying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, thou art worthy to receive glory, and honour, and power; for thou haſt created all things, and for thy pleaſure they are and were created.—It is to know, that the triune majeſty of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, are the threefold power, life, glory, and perfection of every creature, that ſings praiſes to God in heaven and on earth. This is the *proud* knowledge of thoſe who are let into the holy of holies, opened by the ſpirit of God in his choſen inſtrument, *Behmen*. Which goes no deeper, than to ſee the *nothingneſs* of man, aſcends no higher, than to know that God is *all*; which begets nothing in man, but that which was begotten in *Paul*, when he

he cried out, *God forbid, that I ſhould glory in any thing, but the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.*

LETTER XX.

To the ſame.

My dear Friend,

YOUR ſtrictures upon Meſſieurs of the foundry, the tabernacle, &c. are very juſt. Theſe gentlemen ſeem to have no other bottom to ſtand upon but that of zeal. I hope God will direct it for them, that more good may come from it than the world is willing to believe.—But I ſay no more of them.—— I would adviſe you not to enter into diſputes with them, nor any others, in defence of thoſe principles which are the very life and heart of the law, the prophets, and the goſpel.——No one begins to object againſt them, but on the account of ſomething that is perſonal, either with regard to himſelf, or the author of them, or becauſe they are contrary to his views and ſituation in the world. He who could free himſelf from theſe prejudices, would want no one to perſuade him of the truth of them.

Mr. *J. W.* is an ingenious man; and the reaſon why his letter to me is ſuch a juvenile

compoſition of emptineſs and pertneſs, as is below the character of any man who had been ſerious in religion but half a month, is becauſe it was not *ability*, but neceſſity that put his pen into his hand.——He had condemned my books, preached much againſt them; and to make all ſure, forbid his people the uſe of them.—And for a cover to all this, he promiſed from time to time to write againſt them.—Therefore an anſwer was to be made at all adventures.—What you happen to hear of Mr. *J. W.* concerning me or my books, let it die with you.—Wiſh him God ſpeed in every thing that is good.—But this you may eaſily know, that he and the *pope* have the ſame reaſons, and are under the ſame neceſſity of condemning and anathematiſing the myſtery revealed by God, in *J. B.*

Adieu.

Sept. 1756.

P. S. I have no objection to your learning the *French* language, but think you much in the right in intending to proceed very leiſurely in it, and as it were by the by.——To learn, and love the language of the *internal ſpeaker*, is more than to have the tongues of men and angels.

LETTER XXI.

To the ſame.

My dear Friend,

I WAS much concerned at the account you ſent me of the ſtate of your health, and think it very adviſable to ſeek out for help.——But there is the difficulty where to find it.——All is ſo very ſuperficial in the art of phyſic, and from ſo poor a ground, that one has little to like in one phyſician more than in another, but his perſonal tempers and behaviour.——Air and gentle exerciſe much purſued muſt be greatly beneficial to you,—If your phyſician be for your purpoſe, he will not load you with ſhop-medicines, nor ought you to ſubmit to any one that does. ——Nothing can aſſiſt you but ſome ſimple regimen, that gradually leſſens the hectic in your blood.

My dear brother-pilgrim, be of good comfort, our *road* of life is *ſuch*, that weakneſs can help us on as faſt as ſtrength.——Uſe outward medicines as if you uſed them not.—— The *univerſal* is within you, and whether you find it in a ſickly, or a healthy body, is but a ſmall matter.

Daily, hourly, thankful resignation to God in every thing, is the best regimen you can enter into, both for soul and body.——Every good wish attends my dear fellow-traveller out of time into eternity.

Farewel.

Oct. 10, 1756.

LETTER XXII.

To Mr. T. L.

My dear L.

TAMPER with no physicians, but content yourself to have that share of health, which a regular and good life can help you to.—Reflect not upon your predominant complexion, or how long it will be before you get from under its power.—St. *Paul* wanted to be delivered from his thorn in the flesh. He had all he prayed for, though the thorn might continue, when God said to him, *My grace is sufficient for thee:* this was better to him, than if his thorn had been taken from him.—This enabled him to say, I will *glory in my infirmities*; for *when I am weak, then I am strong.* You believe, that if it was not for earnest and continual

tinual prayer, your turn to melancholy would get the better of you.—You cannot believe this too much, for nothing elſe can preſerve you from being led away by every other evil temper. But let reſignation to God be the predominant part of your ſpirit of prayer; it is not ſo much ardent deſires, as humble reſignation to be as God pleaſes, that keeps the heart in the higheſt union with him.—Faith and hope and love get their beſt ſtrength, and work their higheſt work, when reſignation is the ſalt wherewith they are ſeaſoned.

You think, if you was to live an hundred years in an *abſtracted contemplation*, ſome property of nature would ſtill be occaſionally breaking forth in you.—What occaſion had you, my friend, to make this complaint about ſuch a contemplation?

You have no buſineſs with it, nor any reaſon to expect it ſhould do any thing for you.—Had you changed your words, and ſaid, I believe if I was for a hundred years to be wholly truſting in and depending upon God, to do that for me which he has promiſed to do for all that truſt in him, it would not be done:—had you expreſſed your complaint in theſe words, you would have ſeen, that neither faith, nor hope, nor love, nor reſignation, would have allowed you to make it.—Look at yourſelf, at the power of time, or any thing

thing that this or that complexion does, and then you may be afraid of every thing; but look at God, as him that is to do all for you, and in you, and then you need be afraid of nothing.—A thorn, or no thorn, bad or good blood, with all its effects, lose all their difference, as soon as you know, that you are not your own, nor left to yourself, nor where to seek a physician that will not leave you unhealed.

We know that all things must work together for good to *them that love God.* Now what signifies what the things are, if we are to have the same good from them, be they what they will? Let complexion shew itself, let the dead ashes of old sins seem to be ready to come to life again, what is all this, but helping us to be more alive unto God? Flesh will be flesh as long as we live, but every state of the flesh may help us to grow in the spirit.—Therefore rejoice evermore, in every thing give thanks, and call nothing but this *abstracted contemplation.*

Farewel.

LET-

LETTER XXIII.

To *G. W.*

THE large account you have given of yourself is very affecting, and I hope God will turn all the variety you have passed through into means of a future solid peace and rest in his divine love.

To be weary and heavy laden is to have the highest fitness to receive that rest, that CHRIST alone can give. These are the persons that he called to him when he was upon earth. They who are content with themselves are in the utmost danger of never knowing that happiness, for which they were created.

For a while consider yourself in such solitude, as if there was only God and you in the world, free from every thought but that of desiring to be wholly and solely his, and looking wholly to his goodness to be delivered out of the misery of your fallen state.

Stand firmly in this faith, that God and the kingdom of heaven are certainly within you, and within you for this only reason, that they may become your salvation.—As all therefore is within, so let all your care be turned inwards,

in

in loving, adoring, and praying to this GOD and CHRIST within you.

Be not too eager about much reading. Nor read any thing but that which nouriſhes, ſtrengthens, and eſtabliſhes this faith in you, of an inward Saviour, who is the life of your ſoul. To grow up in this faith is taking the beſt means of attaining to the beſt knowledge in all divine matters.

Caſt away all reflections about yourſelf, the world, or your paſt life. And let all be ſwallowed up, or loſt in this joyful thought, that you have found the Meſſiah, the Saviour of the world, not in books, not in hiſtory, but in the birth and bottom of your own ſoul. Give yourſelf up to this birth of heaven within you, expect all from it, let it be the humble, faithful, longing deſire of your heart, and deſire no knowledge but that which is born of it, and proceeds from it. Stand only in this thirſt of knowledge, and then all that you know will be ſpirit and life.

With a heart full of good wiſhes to you,

I am, Sir,

May 8, 1750. *Yours, &c.*

LET-

LETTER XXIV.

To the same.

My dear Friend,

WHOM I heartily love and embrace as a living member of the body of Christ.

There is a time for all things. As to your wanting my counsel or advice, that time is over with you.—Had you less knowledge than you have of the divine life, it would be sufficient to shew you, that all that the best of men and books can do for us, is to lead us from ourselves to God.

I know not myself how to write to the most illuminated person upon earth for advice, or instruction. And the more dark and distressed my state should be, the more I should be averse to seek counsel of any creature; not from an opinion of any sufficiency in myself, but from a fulness of conviction, that I run away from *relief*, and deprive myself of *true light* and *comfort* by not seeking and depending upon GOD ALONE for it.

All my writings have no other end, but to communicate *this conviction* to my readers, and consequently to teach them, to have *done with*

with me, as soon as I have convinced them, that GOD and CHRIST and the kingdom of heaven are only to be found by man in his own heart, and only capable of being found there, by his own love of them, faith in them, and absolute dependence upon them.

What room therefore for calling out for help and direction, when once it is known, that all consists in an implicit blind faith, in purity of love, and total resignation to the spirit of God? For where can these be exercised, but in the states and trials through which human life must pass?

And to acquiesce in God when things are inwardly and outwardly easy with us, but to cast about for help from something that is not God, when distress and darkness come upon us, is the error of errors, and the greatest hindrance to our true union with God in CHRIST JESUS.

I am, with much truth and sincerity,

Sept. 22, 1754. *Your affectionate friend.*

LET-

LETTER XXV.

To the same.

My dear Friend,

THE charge of *Spinosism* brought against me by Dr. *Warburton* has all the folly and weakness, *&c. &c.* that can be well imagined. For as Spinosism is nothing else but a gross confounding of God and nature, making them to be only one and the same thing, so the full absurdity and absolute impossibility of it, can only be fundamentally proved by that doctrine which can go to the bottom of the matter, and demonstrate the essential, eternal, and absolute distinction between God and nature; a thing done over and over, from page to page, in those books from which the doctor has extracted Spinosism, just with as much acuteness, as if he had spied rank *Warburtonianism* in my letter to the Right Reverend the Bishop of *London*.

Now though the difference between God and nature has always been supposed and believed, yet the true ground of such distinction, or the *why*, the *how*, and in *what* they are essentially different, and must be so to all eternity, was to be found in no books, till the good-

goodneſs of God, in a way not leſs than that of miracle, made a poor illiterate man, in the ſimplicity of a child, to open and relate the deep myſterious ground of all things; in which is ſhewn the *birth and beginning* of nature, or the firſt workings of the *inconceivable* God, opening and manifeſting his *hidden triune Deity* in an outward ſtate of glory, in the ſplendor of united *fire*, *light*, and *ſpirit*, all kindled and diſtinguiſhed, all united and beautified, by the hidden, inviſible, inconceivable, ſupernatural Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, working all the glories in heaven, and every kind of life, and bleſſing on earth, by viſible and inviſible fire, light and ſpirit.

This is the wonderful gift of God to theſe laſt diſtracted ages of the world; and as every purpoſe of God muſt ſtand, and ſooner or later produce all that which God intended by it; ſo the more the wiſe and the learned in all churches reject this counſel of God, the more they will promote its ſucceſs over themſelves, and only help it to come forth with greater ſtrength and glory to God, by being owned and proclaimed by the mouths of babes and ſucklings.

Babel has always had men for its builders; but the kingdom of God ever was, and ever will be made up of little children.

Farewel.

April 10, 1757.

P. S.

P. S. I have read the pamphlet you sent on *divinity studies*. It may be said to be much better than most of the kind in this and the last century, and infinitely beyond Mr. *Wesley*'s Babyloniſh *addreſs to the clergy*; but yet ſo wrong, as to be worſe than no advice at all. ——We ſeem to be farther from the goſpel in point of ſpirit, than in diſtance of time. ——What ſhall I ſay? Babel is not a city, it is the whole Chriſtian world. As to all theſe directors of divinity-ſtudents no more folly need be laid to their charge, than is done by our Lord in theſe words, *Without me ye can do nothing*; as *my Father ſent me, ſo ſend I you*; the *Holy Spirit ſhall guide you into all truth*. To all which the apoſtle ſubſcribes in theſe words, *Who hath made us able miniſters, not of the letter, but* of *the ſpirit*.

Now put theſe words of Chriſt and his apoſtle at the beginning and end of Mr. *Weſley*'s *addreſs*, and then you will ſee, that almoſt all that is betwixt them is empty babble, fitter for an old *grammarian* that was grown blear-eyed in mending dictionaries, than for one who had taſted the powers of the world to come, and had found the *truth as it is in Jeſus*.

LETTER XXVI.

To the Same.

My dear Friend,

CONCERNING the approach of the *great day* near it certainly is, though it may be not ſtrictly according to the *ſcripture arithmetic*, and *calculations* which have been preſented to the public. That the *ſeven thouſandth year* is but a little way off is undeniable, and it may be affirmed upon ſufficient ground that the *ſix days creation* will laſt no longer than till it comes.

And though the *ſcripture prophecies*, *figures*, and *numbers*, are certainly intended to point out the time, yet I am apt to believe, that the meſſenger of God (whether one or more) who as a forerunner is to proclaim this time, will not be left to take his proof from them, but be as much an *original* in his way, as any of the prophets of old were.——And though he may no more work any outward miracles than *John Baptiſt* did, yet he will come burning and ſhining in ſuch a light of divine diſtinction from all others, as may anſwer in the ſpirit to that which was formerly done in

in the flesh, when the blind saw, the deaf heard, the lame walked, the dead were raised, and to the poor the gospel was preached.

End all your letters to me, as I end this, with only adding my name. Your name is compliment enough to me.

April 2, 1760.

LETTER XXVII.

Extract from a Letter to a Clergyman.

Dear Sir,

MR. W. will convey Rusbrochius to you. —Every one has his *proper way from God*, if he is so happy as to find and follow it, without seeking out one of his own. My mind has for many years turned from, or rather passed by, every religious matter that requires *critical abilities*, or that carries me to any help but that which is to be found within me.

I never could go through even the divine *Rusbrochius*, in his spiritualizing the Mosaic tabernacle, and all that belonged to it.—His illuminated eye saw Christ figured and typified in every part, and what he saw he told the world.

But as to myſelf, I cannot go back to ſearch for the *ſhadow of the myſtery* under its *types* and *figures*, becauſe the ſubſtance *itſelf* is come. And I find more enjoyment of it, by ſimply giving myſelf up to *that* which is to be had from a Chriſt, not as known under Jewiſh prophecies, but as come in the fleſh, and made man in every one who *receives him*.

Next to the *ſcriptures* my only book is the *illuminated Behmen*. And him I only follow ſo far as he helps to open in me *that* which God had opened in him, concerning the death and the life of the fallen and redeemed man.

The whole kingdom of grace and nature was *opened* in him. And the whole kingdom of grace and nature *lies hid* in myſelf. And therefore in reading of him I am always at home, and kept cloſe to the kingdom of God that is within me.

Wiſhing you every bleſſing of divine light and direction, I ſubſcribe myſelf,

Your hearty friend

Nov. 3, 1759.

and ſervant.

LET-

LETTER XXVIII.

To a Clergyman of *Weſtmoreland.*

Reverend Sir,

CONCERNING the following texts, God hardened the heart of Pharaoh;—He hath mercy on whom *he will have mercy, and whom he will he heardeneth*;——Good and *evil are from the Lord*;——I *create light*, and I create darkneſs; you aſk, How can theſe things be conſiſtently affirmed of a God all love and goodneſs to his creatures?

I would aſk you alſo, Is there any difficulty of admitting the truth of this ſcripture, *In God we live, and move, and have our being?* Does this claſh with the idea of a God all love and goodneſs to the creatures?—— Now take all the contrary things that are ſaid of God with relation to that which paſſes between God and man, and they all imply no more, affirm no more, than the ſingle foregoing text, namely, that in every ſtate of the life of man, be it what it will, either under a ſenſe and enjoyment of good, or the power and pain of evil, it is all owing to this *divine, original, eſſential relation* be-

tween God and man, or becauſe in him we *live, and move, and have our being*——For man, thus come from God, muſt through the whole courſe or endleſs ages of his life, neither know, nor find, nor feel any thing of good or evil, life or death, happineſs or miſery, but ſolely becauſe of *that* which God is in him and to him, and becauſe of *that* which he is in God, and hath from him by his original birth or creation.

The earthly animals, whoſe birth is only in and from this world, can have no evil of ſin or miſery in their ſtate from God; and that only for this one reaſon, becauſe they are not born of God, or partakers of the divine nature. Therefore God's creating evil in man is the ſame thing, as if it was ſaid, the *divine birth* in man is that which creates his evil, becauſe he could have no ſin of a wrathful, proud, hardened heart, theſe things could neither exiſt in him, or be known by him, but becauſe he came into being by a divine birth.——Angels could not be diabolical ſpirits of darkneſs, fiery dragons of wrath, fury, malice, vengeance, envy, hatred, *&c. &c.* but becauſe they were all born of God, to live and move and have their being in him. This has created all the evil of every kind that they can feel or know in their whole ſtate.

All

All the difficulty of reconciling such contrary things as are said of God, that he willeth only *life* and *good*, and yet that evil and death are said to come from him, arises from our considering the operations of God in a *creaturely manner*, or as we should understand the same contrary things if they were affirmed of any creature.——Whereas the operation of God, in its whole kind and nature, is as different from any thing that can be done by creatures, as the work and manner of creation is different in power, nature, and manner, from that which creatures can do to one another.——For (N. B.) the operation of God is never *in* or *with* the creature in any *other manner*, or doing any *other thing*, but that which it *was* and *did* in the creation of them.—This, and this alone, is the working of the Deity in heaven and on earth; nothing comes from him, or is done by him through all the eternity of his creatures, but that *essential* manifestation of himself in them which began the glory and perfection of their first existence.——Now from this one, single, immutable operation of God, that he can be nothing else in or towards the creature, but that same love and goodness that he was to it at its creation, it necessarily follows, that to the creature that turns from him, God can be nothing else to it but the cause of all its evil and miserable state. Hence is that of the

apoſtle, that *ſin cometh by the law, becauſe where there is no law, there is no tranſgreſſion.* ——Now God, or the divine nature in man, is the one great law of God in man, from which all that is good and all that is evil in him hath its whole ſtate and nature.——His life can have no holineſs or goodneſs in it, but as the divine nature within him is the law by which he lives. He can commit no other ſin, or feel any kind of hurt or evil from it, but what comes from reſiſting or rebelling againſt *that* of God which is in him; and therefore the good and evil of man are equally from God.——And yet this could not be but becauſe of this ground, *viz.* that God is unchangeable love and goodneſs, and has only *one will and work* of love and goodneſs towards the creature.——Juſt as the law could not make ſin or evil, but becauſe it has no ſin or evil in itſelf, but is immutably righteous, holy, and good, and has only one *will and one work* towards man, whether he receives good or evil by it.—Therefore the righteous holy law, that is ſo becauſe it never changes its good will and work towards man, can truly ſay of itſelf theſe two contrary things, I *create good*, and I *create evil*, without the leaſt contradiction.——In the like truth, and from the ſame ground it muſt be ſaid, that happineſs and miſery, life and death, tenderneſs, and hardneſs of heart, are from God,

or

or becauſe God is that which he is in and to the birth and life of man.

This is the one true key to the ſtate of man *before* his fall, to his ſtate *after* his fall, and to the whole nature of his redemption. All which three ſtates are in a few words of our Saviour ſet forth in the cleareſt and ſtrongeſt degree of light. *I am the true vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, bringeth forth much fruit.*—— This was man's firſt created ſtate of glory and perfection, it was a living and abiding in God, ſuch a birth and communion of life with him, and from him, as the branch hath in and from the vine.

The nature of man's fallen ſtate, and whence he has all the evil that is in it, is ſet forth in the following words, *If a man abide not in* me (the true vine) *he is caſt forth as a branch,* and is *withered, and men gather them, and they are caſt into the fire and burned.* This comprehends the whole of man's fallen ſtate, namely, a being broken off from the life of God, and therefore become ſuch a poor, withered, helpleſs creature, as may have all that done to him as a fire-brand of hell and devils, which men may do to a broken-off withered branch of the vine. And his ſtate is as different from that of his creation, as a withered branch ſmoaking and burning in the fire, is different from its firſt ſtate of life

and

and growth in the rich ſpirit of the vine.—Again the whole of man's redeemed ſtate is in the following words.—*I am the bread of life that came down from heaven*;—He *that eateth this bread ſhall live for ever*;—*Whoſo eateth my fleſh and drinketh my blood hath eternal life,—dwelleth in me and I in him.*

This is our whole redemption, it conſiſts in nothing elſe but having the full life of God or birth of Chriſt begotten and born in us again.——And thus do theſe three ſtates of man fully ſhew, that our firſt perfection, our miſerable fall, and bleſſed redemption, have all that they have in them, whether of glory or miſery, merely and ſolely becauſe God alone is all that is good, and can be nothing elſe but good towards the creature; and that neither angel nor man can be happy or miſerable, but becauſe it either hath, or hath not, this one God of goodneſs eſſentially living and operating in it.

What a number of things called religion are here cut off at once? ſince nothing is life, happineſs, and glory, but the *one eſſential operation* of the triune God of love and goodneſs within us; nothing is death, evil, or miſery, but the departure or turning from this eſſential God of our lives to ſomething that we would have from ourſelves, or the creatures that are about us.——And how greatly is he deluded, who living among the throng of

of religious ſchemes, thinks this, or that, or any thing in nature, can be his atonement, his reconciliation, and union with God, but the ſpirit, the body, and the blood of Chriſt, forming themſelves into a new creature within him. Then, and then only, is he that firſt man that God created, in whom alone he can be well pleaſed. But till then, he is that man whom the *cherubs* two-edged flaming ſword will not ſuffer to enter into Paradiſe—How is it now that we are to regain that firſt birth of Chriſt? Why juſt in the ſame way as Adam had it at firſt. What did he then do? How did he help forward God's creating power?—Now creating again, or reſtoring a firſt life in God, is juſt the ſame thing, and the ſame ſole work of God, as creating us at firſt; and therefore we can have no more ſhare of power in the one, than in the other.——Nothing lies upon us as creatures fallen from God, or is required of us with regard to our growth in God, but not to *reſiſt that* which God is doing towards a *new creation* of us.

That which God is doing towards the new creation of us had its beginning before the foundation of the world.—*In Chriſt Jeſus*, ſaith St. *Paul, we were choſen before the foundation of the world*; the ſame as ſaying, that God out of his great mercy had choſen to preſerve a ſeed of the WORD and SPIRIT of God in

in fallen man, which through the mediation of a God incarnate ſhould revive into that fullneſs of ſtature in Chriſt Jeſus, in which Adam was at firſt created. And all this work of God towards a new creation is by that ſame *eſſential operation* of God in us, which at firſt created us in his image and likeneſs. And therefore nothing belongs to man in it, but only to yield himſelf up to it, and not reſiſt it.

Now who is it that may be ſaid to *reſiſt* it? It is every one who does *not deny himſelf, take up his croſs daily*, and *follow* Chriſt. For every thing but this is that *fleſh* that warreth againſt the ſpirit. The whole life of the *natural man* reſiſteth all that *eſſential operation* of God which would create us again in Chriſt Jeſus. —Farther, every religious man reſiſteth it in and by and through the whole courſe of his religion, who takes any thing to be the truth of piety, the truth of devotion, the truth of religious worſhip, but faith, and hope, and truſt, and dependence upon *that alone*, which the all-creating WORD, and all-ſanctifying SPIRIT of God, inwardly, eſſentially, and vitally work in his ſoul.

Would you know how you are to to underſtand this *eſſential* operation of the triune holy Deity in our ſouls, and why nothing elſe is, or can be that grace or help of God which bring-

bringeth ſalvation, take this earthly ſimilitude of the matter.

The *light* and *air* of this world are univerſal powers, that are eſſential to the life of all the creatures of this world. They are *eſſential*, becauſe nothing *ſees* till the light has brought forth a *birth* of itſelf in the eſſence of the creature, which birth of light can laſt no longer, than it is eſſentially united with the operation of that univerſal light which brought it forth:—Air is alſo eſſential to the *life* of the creature, becauſe nothing lives, till a birth of the air is born in it, nor any longer, than its own in-born air is in *eſſential union* with that univerſal air, and operation of air, that firſt brought it forth.—Now from this eſſential unalterable relation between light and air and ſeeing living creatures, it plainly follows, that darkneſs and death may be aſcribed to them as well as ſeeing and life.

Thus if light and air could ſay any thing of *themſelves* in outward words of that which they are, and do to all animals; If the light was to ſay, It is I that make *ſeeing* and *blind* eyes; If the air was to ſay, I create *life*, and I create *death*; could there be any difficulty of underſtanding, or allowing the truth of theſe words? Or could they be true in any other ſenſe, but becauſe where light is not there is the *cauſe* of darkneſs, and where air is not there is the *cauſe* of death?—And

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in the ſtricteſt truth of the words, *ſeeing* and *blind* eyes are from the light; *living* and *dead* bodies are from the air. Becauſe darkneſs could not be but becauſe light does not ſhine in it, nor the body be dead but becauſe the breathing of the air is not in it.

It is thus with the *eſſential operation* of the triune Holy God in the life of all divine and godly creatures, whether men or angels.—The light and Holy Spirit of God are univerſal powers, and *eſſential* to the birth of a godly life in the creature; which creaturely birth of a divine life can begin no ſooner, than the WORD and SPIRIT of God bring forth a birth of themſelves in the creature, nor ſubſiſt any longer, than it is united with, and under the continual operation of that word and ſpirit which brought it forth.—Hence it is truly ſaid, that ſpiritual life and ſpiritual death, ſpiritual good and ſpiritual evil, happineſs and miſery, are from God; and that for this one reaſon, becauſe there is no good but in God, nor any other operation of God in and to the creature, but that of heavenly life, light, love, and goodneſs.

When man, created in the image and likeneſs of God, to be an habitation and manifeſtation of the triune God of goodneſs, had by the perverſeneſs of a falſe will turned from his holy ſtate of life in God, and ſo was dead to the bleſſed union and eſſential operation of God,

God in his ſoul, yet the goodneſs of God towards men altered not, but ſtood in the ſame good will towards man as at the firſt, and willed, and could will nothing elſe towards the whole human nature, but that every individual of it might be ſaved from that ſtate of death and miſery in an earthly nature, into which they were fallen.

Hence, that is, from this unchangeable love of God towards man, which could no more ceaſe than God could ceaſe, came forth that wonderful ſcene of providence, of ſuch a variety of means, and diſpenſations, of viſions, voices, and meſſages from heaven, of law, of prophecies, of promiſes and threatenings, all adapted to the different ſtates, conditions, and ages of the fallen world, for no other end, but by every art of divine wiſdom, and contrivance of love, to break off man from his earthly deluſion, and beget in him a ſenſe of his loſt glory, and ſo make him capable of finding again that bleſſed eſſential operation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in his ſoul, which was the eſſential glory of his firſt creation.

Now as in this ſcene of a divine and redeeming providence, God had to do with a poor, blind, earthly creature, that had loſt all ſenſe of heavenly things as they are in themſelves, ſo the wiſdom of God muſt often, as it were, humaniſe itſelf, and condeſcend

descend to speak of himself after the manner of men. He must speak of his eyes, his ears, his hands, his nose, *&c.* because the earthly creature, the mere natural man, could no otherwise be brought into any sense of *that* which God was to him.

But now all this process of divine Providence was only for the sake of something higher; the mystery of God in man and man in God still lay hid, and was no more opened, than the mystery of a redeeming Christ was opened in the type of a paschal lamb.

Pentecost alone was that which took away all veils, and shewed the kingdom of God as it was in itself, and set man again under the immediate essential operation of God, which first gave birth to a holy Adam in Paradise. Types and shadows ended because the substance of them was found. The cloven tongues of fire had put an end to them by opening the divine eyes which Adam had closed up, unstopping the spiritual ears that he had filled with clay, and making his dumb sons to speak with new tongues.

And what did they say? They said all old things were gone; that a new heaven and a new earth were coming forth; that God himself was manifested in the flesh of men, who were now *all taught of God*. And what were they taught? That same which Adam wa taught by his first created life in God,

God, namely, that the immediate eſſential operation of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, was henceforth the birthright of all that were become true diſciples of Chriſt.——Thus ended the old creation, and the fall of man, in a God manifeſted in the fleſh, dying in and for the world, and coming again in ſpirit to be the life and light of all the ſons of Adam.

Look now at all God's diſpenſations to the day of Pentecoſt, in this true point of view, as ſo many ſchools of different diſcipline and education of the natural man, till by a birth from above he could bear the language of heaven, and be taught of God, and then you will ſufficiently ſee the childiſh folly of thoſe grey-headed doctors, who forgetting that the *laſt times* are come, when God will be known only as a ſpirit, worſhiped only in ſpirit, becauſe every thing elſe but ſhadow and not the truth, yet ſet up themſelves as maſters or rabbies of new ſchools of their own, which can only keep up that doating learning and wiſdom of words, which compelled the learned Jews, for the ſake of God and goodneſs, for the ſake of law and propheſy, to crucify the Chriſt of God as a Belzebub and blaſphemer.

This old logic, and criticiſm of ſcribes and phariſees, are what rob diſputing Chriſ-

tians of the truth as it is in Jesus, and instead of the true bread that came down from heaven, feeds their unregenerate hearts with the dry husks of *that*, which can be got from text set against text in the outward letter. Nay, so wise are these verbal proficients, as to think the gospel must be false, and the Bible itself only fit to be burned, if *all that* is not to be ascribed to God, as true of him as he is in himself, which in condescension to the poor, ignorant, fallen, earthly creature, he speaks of his eyes, his ears, his hands, his turning his back, and turning his face, his coming down, and going up, his fiery wrath, his destroying fury, everlasting vengeance, *&c. &c.* —Whereas all these things are said, not because of *that* which God is in himself, in his holy supernatural being, but because of that which man is, in the blindness of his fallen state so ignorant of God, so averse to godliness, as only capable for a time to be instructed by the impressions of such language:——That is, till the threatenings of the law, and the word of prophesy have done their work, and that *day star ariseth in the heart*, which knoweth and teacheth that CREATOR, REDEEMER, and LOVE, are the one true unchangeable triune God, That Father, That Son, and Holy Spirit, which from everlasting to everlasting have

have only *one will*, and *one work of* heavenly life, light, and love in and *towards* the creature.——And as true as this is, so true is it also, that from the first to the last man no one was or ever will be any farther from this essential operation of the holy Deity in his soul, but so far as he hath withdrawn himself from it.——*God hardened the heart of Pharaoh*; this saith neither more nor less, than that *Pharaoh* had withdrawn his heart from God. When God saith to *Moses*, *I will harden his heart, that he will not let the people go*; it hath no other meaning, than to give to *Moses* that same full assurance of *Pharaoh*'s state, which he gave to *Jeremiah* at another time. *Thou shalt* (saith God) *speak all these words to them*, (N. B.) *but they will not hearken to thee, thou shall call unto them, but they will not answer thee*, Jer. vii. 27.——God helped *Pharaoh* to his *hardened heart*, just as he helped *Adam* not to be *afraid* of eating of the evil tree, by assuring him that certain death was hid in it.—But *Adam*'s turning from God to hear the voice and instruction of his own *reason* and *imagination*, and the suggestions of a satanical serpent, was that which created in him a new hardened heart, bold enough to eat of the forbidden tree.—Now here, Sir, I would have you observe, that this rise of the first sin fully demonstrates how the mat-

ter *unalterably* ſtands between God and every ſinner to the end of the world; there cannot be the ſmalleſt variation, either on the ſide of God, or on the ſide of the ſinner. The *whole nature* of God, his one unalterable will and work, ſtands in the ſame full oppoſition and contrariety to every work of ſin in every man, as it did to *Adam*'s firſt tranſgreſſion. Nothing new will ever be in any ſin, it has but one way of coming into the world, it muſt always be born out of ſelf and Satan as the firſt was.—And that which God did to prevent the firſt ſin, ſaying to *Adam*, *eat not*, that ſame miraculous voice of love keeps ſaying and ſaying to every ſon of *Adam*, *ſin not*.

Yet ſo wiſe in the ways of God are ſome divinity-ſtudents, as to teach and preach, that the whole world, through its thouſands of years, has been bringing forth its millions of myriads of ſinners all round the globe, who as ſoon as they have done with the vanity and miſery of this world are to be roaring in the hotteſt fire of an eternal hell. For what? Why, becauſe they have been juſt as wicked as the decrees of God required and forced them to be. And alſo through every age of the world there hath always been a *little* number of righteous, who were to go to heaven, which number had no littleneſs in it but

but becauſe God would not ſuffer it to be greater.

Can a charge like this be brought againſt Satan? Nay, doth it not even free Satan from all the evil that is charged upon him, and make him, though going about as a roaring lion, to be as inſignificant a tool in the work of ſin, as the preacher is in the work of Godlineſs, though with ever ſo loud a voice he beſeeches the *reprobate* to be reconciled to God, or with tears in his eyes exhorts the *elect* not to depart from him?

You once, I remember, ſaid to me, that you thought I overdid the matter in my cenſure upon learning.—Let learning therefore ſpeak for itſelf. Let its own works praiſe it. What has it done? What has brought forth a *multiplicity* of churches but that very ſame acuteneſs of learning, which aſſerts and proves there is but *one?* Whence comes tranſubſtantiation, election, reprobation, juſtification of ſeveral ſorts, neceſſity and inſignificance of works, Socinianiſm, Arianiſm, &c. but from that knowledge of hiſtory, and critical ſkill in words, which are the glory of the learned world.

Without me ye can do nothing, ſaith Chriſt. —*That which a man ſoweth that ſhall he reap*, ſaith the apoſtle. Truths like theſe, of which the ſcripture is full, would keep all believers in

in the true church, attentive to the one thing needful, had not a learning falsely so called, filled all eyes with the dust of darkness.

Now, Sir, be as sober as you will about the use and power of learning, logic, and eloquence, in the doctrines of salvation; condemn the bad use that Heretics, Schismatics, Arians, and Socinians have made of them; yet let me whisper this truth into your ear, that you will never be delivered from the delusion and cheat of your own learning, till by a light of life risen up within you, you come to see and know that you want no more learning to change you from a sinner into a saint, than *Mary Magdalen* did.

God said to *Abraham, Walk before me, and be thou perfect.* This was the *Hebrew* school, in which the father of the faithful was to learn to be perfect.—But here now comes the scholar-critic, and finds, that matters stand not thus now, because the glorious light of the gospel (he says) has discovered that all lies in an *election* and *reprobation*, and that salvation and damnation come from nothing else, the apostle expressly saying, *It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*—What a learned strife has there been about the meaning of these words! And yet they mean not one jot more

more or leſs, than when the apoſtle ſaith, *The natural man knoweth not the things of the ſpirit, neither can he know them.*—All that is in the one text is in the other; and both of them ſay only this one great and good truth, namely, that the creature can have no divine life, light, goodneſs, and happineſs, but from *that* which the holy triune God is, and operates by a birth of his holy nature in it.

Farewell.

FINIS.

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